

DAYBREAK SERIES

JAN.-MARCH/1978

Adult Sabbath School Lessons

GOD THE CREATOR



“But I don’t own a farm”

Years ago, many Adventists were farmers. Some still are. But the majority of us today are involved in fields far-removed from tilling the soil.

The idea of a Sabbath School Investment project may still bring to mind an acre of wheat specifically set aside for God’s unique blessing. Maybe that’s why many of us are not yet involved in an investment project.

If you’ve been missing out on the unique, faith-building adventure of a

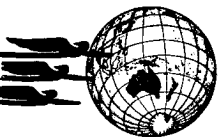


partnership with God in an investment project, don’t blame it on the fact that you “don’t own a farm.” God can bless a project even if you live in an apartment.

Be creative. Think of a special project this quarter to raise funds for investment. Children will especially enjoy a family project, be it gathering tin cans, washing cars or whatever better idea you conceive. Investing with God is an investment for eternity.

Invest with God

Unlimited partnership opportunities still available.



AUSTRALASIAN DIVISION OF

THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH

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OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

Dear Fellow Sabbath School Members,

No country within the territory of the Australasian Division presents the Church with a greater challenge than does Papua New Guinea. This land, so recently lifted from the stone-age into the late 20th century is developing with tremendous momentum. This is also true of the Seventh-day Adventist church in Papua New Guinea whose resources are straining to maintain an ever developing medical, educational and evangelistic programme.

Three special projects within the Papua New Guinea Union Mission will benefit from the 13th Sabbath offering, first quarter, 1978. They are:

1. The replacement of mission aircraft which are so vital to communication in a land of vast distances, high mountains and inadequate roads and public transport services;
2. A much needed classroom and administrative block at Sonoma College, senior Adventist educational institution of the Union, and;
3. The erecting of a number of much needed evangelistic youth centres in many of the fast-growing cities and towns of the newly independent nation of Papua New Guinea.

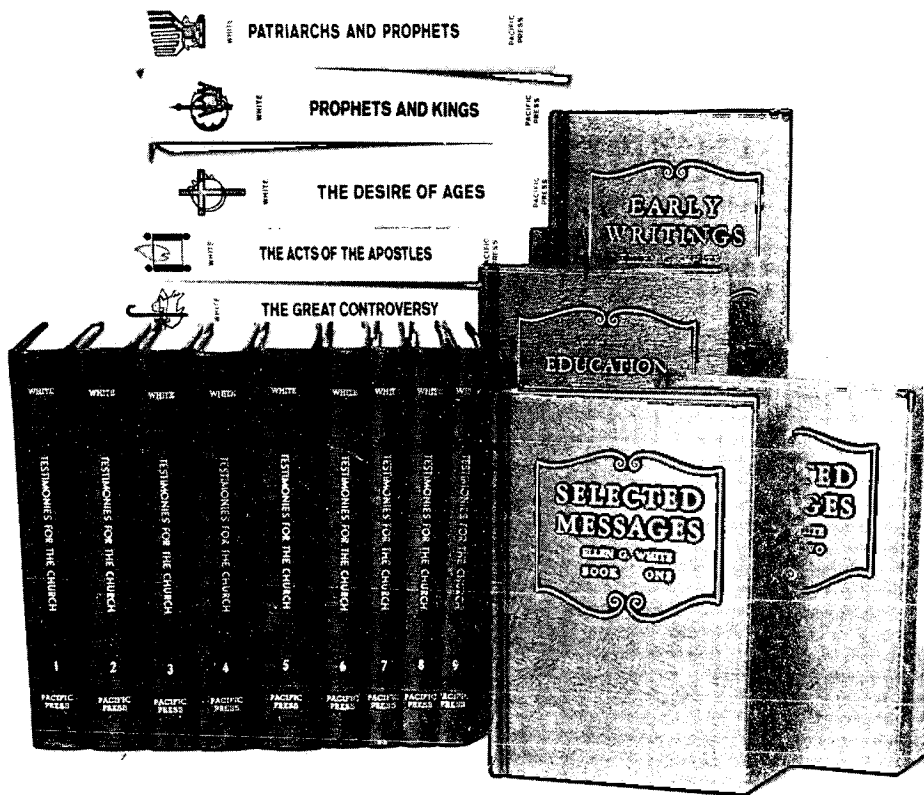
Scattered throughout the mission lands of the South Pacific are many useful monuments of Sabbath School members' sacrificial giving. These were special 13th Sabbath projects of the past which are now completed and performing an important function in the outreach of the church.

Papua New Guinea thanks you again in anticipation of an overflowing offering this coming 13th Sabbath.

Yours very sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "K. S. Parmenter".

K. S. Parmenter
President



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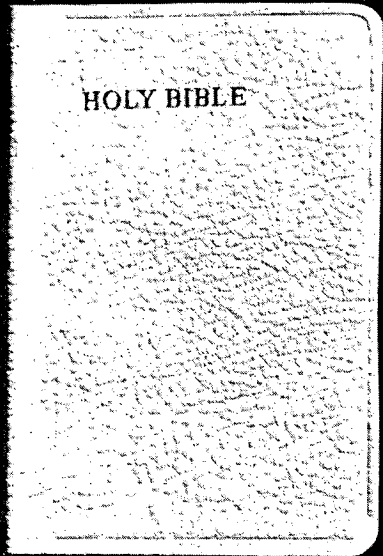
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BEFORE

all
else
fails,
read
the



instructions.

So often we fail because we try to solve our problems in our own way.

When we trust in God and study His Word daily, we can be confident of victory over the perplexities of this world and have a home in the life to come.

GOD THE CREATOR

Introduction

The greatest demonstration of God's power is the creation of life in man and in all living things. Although we cannot explain what life really is, we see its results, and all who enjoy life dread the day when it will fade from the body and leave a lifeless corpse.

People want to live. There is no greater victory that God can gain for man than the victory over death. That is basic. Without it every other gift becomes meaningless. God's gift of life must head any list of divine blessings. The Bible is, in a sense, the story of God's efforts to gain for man victory over death and to give him everlasting life.

God has no rival in His power to conquer death and to give eternal life to man, for He is the Creator. No other god can justly make that claim.

Our Creator God formed the earth and created Adam out of the dust of the ground. This same God came to this earth and was born a child. When wicked men took His life, they could not keep Him in the tomb. By His inherent power the resurrection took place.

In the near future God's power over death will be demonstrated again in the resurrection and immortalization of the saints. Then those who have believed in Jesus will experience the victory over death for which they have longed.

When this takes place, God's children will be able to look forward to an unending life in Paradise. By this resurrection of believers, the purpose of God in creating the world will at last be realized. We shall enjoy fellowship again with our Creator, and the entire universe will throb with undiminished love for the Lord. The greatest gift that can be given will have been bestowed upon the saints.

This quarter we shall study about the Lord as Creator and Life-giver. The lessons will include the questions of time in the creation of the world, and of the relation of the Flood to understanding data often interpreted as supporting evolution.

We live in a scientific age. Science dominates the thinking of many people. Some scientific theories have caused many people to doubt the authority of Scripture. In these last days it is important for God's church to understand what is true science and to call man back again to the worship of the Creator. The three great messages which are to be given in a loud cry in these days can be understood only in the light of the power and work of the Creator.

God the Creator

"He hath made the earth by his power, he hath established the world by his wisdom, and hath stretched out the heavens by his discretion" (Jer. 10:12).

The experiences of everyday life teach us that all that exists was made by somebody. Our buildings, roads, vehicles, and much more, were designed and constructed by people. Some of these things were made so long ago that we do not know who made them. We may not know when they were made, nor even why. Such a mystery is Stonehenge in Wiltshire, England. There, on Salisbury Plain, some twenty huge sandstone blocks weighing about 28 tons stand in an incomplete circle. Within are other huge stones. Together they form a monument, now in ruins, which has puzzled historians for a long time. The builders, their purposes, and their methods are all unknown. The time of building is conjectured to be about 3500 years ago. But although so little is known about the Stonehenge monument, no one doubts that people erected it. There is evidence of intelligence in its arrangement.

Some things in the world exceed man's ability to produce. Our planet Earth itself clearly was not produced by man, neither was the sky over his head, nor the air he breathes. Man is not self-made. He is always born. But where did the first mother and father come from?

Wherever we find something that people make, we conclude that it was made by people. When we see in our world things people cannot make, is it reasonable to conclude that they "just happened"?

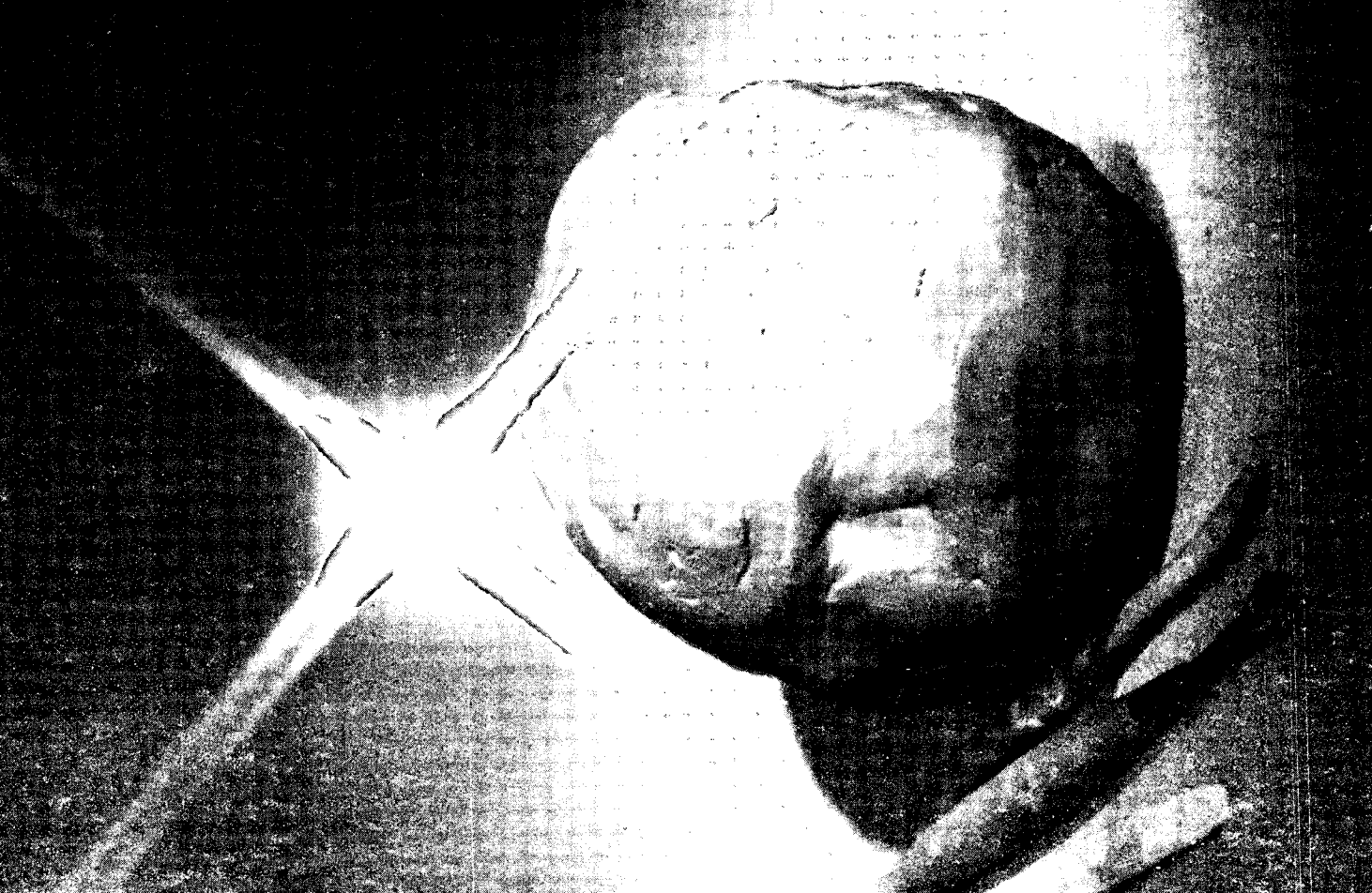
The prophet Jeremiah declares that

God created the world and the heavens. Within the world there is evidence that he is right. In the many forms of living things we see design that points to an intelligent Designer. We see power that points to a powerful Maker. We see morality that points to a moral Person.

Who is this One pointed to by design, power, and morality, and identified by Jeremiah as "the Lord"? In this week's lesson we will study what the Bible says about the Creator of earth and heaven.

DAILY HIGHLIGHTS

1. **God Above All Gods**
(Jer. 10:11, 12)
2. **Giver of Life**
(Ps. 36:9)
3. **Satan Cannot Create Life**
(Gen. 3:4)
4. **The Great Sustainer**
(Isa. 40:26)
5. **No Beginning—No End**
(Ps. 90:2)
6. **Giver of Eternal Life**
(1 John 5:11, 12)



Part 1
GOD ABOVE
ALL GODS

How does the Lord, the true God, differ from other gods?

"Thus shall ye say unto them, The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, even they shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens. He hath made the earth by his power, he hath established the world by his wisdom, and hath stretched out the heavens by his discretion" (Jer. 10:11, 12).

In the tenth chapter of Jeremiah the prophet contrasts the Lord and idols. He notes that an idol is made from a tree, crafted and embellished by men. He likens idols to "scarecrows in a cucumber field." They are worthless things that cannot speak, walk, or act. And their instruction is like themselves—"wooden." By contrast the Lord can act so mightily that He created the heavens and the earth. His voice is heard in the thunder, and it is He who makes the lightning, the rain, and the wind. No scarecrow, He, but the true, living God, and everlasting King.

"The Bible is a history that tells us of the creation of the world and opens to us past centuries. Without it we should have been left to conjecture and fable in regard to the occurrences of the remote past. It reveals to us the Creator of the heavens and the earth, with the universe that He has brought into being, and it sheds a glorious light over the world to come."—*Counsels to Teachers*, p. 421.

To whom will God not transfer His glory and power? Isa. 42:5, 8.

THINK IT THROUGH

How does belief in spontaneous generation, the ability of nonliving matter to change into living matter, relate to the power of the Creator?

In recent times there has been a revival of belief in spontaneous generation. This view is totally contrary to all experience with life and living things. It contradicts one of the most basic laws of biology—life begets life. It also contradicts the teaching of the Bible that the Lord made all living things.

"Not all the wisdom and skill of man can produce life in the smallest object in nature. It is only through the life which God Himself has imparted, that either plant or animal can live. So it is only through the life from God that spiritual life is begotten in the hearts of men. Unless a man is 'born from above,' he cannot become a partaker of the life which Christ came to give. John 3:3, margin."—*Steps to Christ*, p. 67.

FURTHER STUDY

Testimonies, vol. 8, pp. 263, 264.

**Part 2
GIVER
OF LIFE**

"With thee is the fountain of life: In thy light shall we see light" (Ps. 36:9).

In what ways is God "the fountain of life"?

What is life? Even scientists find difficulty in defining it. Life makes the difference between a living body and a dead one. We observe life and experience it, but we know very little about what makes a living person alive. The Bible points to God as the source of all life, and the breath of God as that which quickened Adam after God formed him of the dust of the ground. Not only did God originate life in this world, but He also sustains the life of every living creature.

Ellen White notes: "For all the objects of His creation the condition is the same—a life sustained by receiving the life of God, a life exercised in harmony with the Creator's will. To transgress His law, physical, mental, or moral, is to place one's self out of harmony with the universe, to introduce discord, anarchy, ruin."—*Education*, pp. 99, 100.

How is life maintained? Acts 17:28.

"The beating heart, the throbbing pulse, every nerve and muscle in the living organism, is kept in order and activity by the power of an ever-present God."—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 417

What are some ways in which the Creator's power will be active in the future? 1 Cor. 15:51-54.

THINK IT THROUGH

In the light of today's lesson, how should a Christian regard his birthday celebrations?

"On birthday occasions the children should be taught that they have reason for gratitude to God for His loving-kindness in preserving their lives for another year. Precious lessons might thus be given. For life, health, food, and clothing, no less than for the hope of eternal life, we are indebted to the Giver of all mercies; and it is due to God to recognize His gifts, and to present our offerings of gratitude to our greatest benefactor. These birthday gifts are recognized of Heaven."—*Counsels on Sabbath School Work*, p. 143.

FURTHER STUDY

The Desire of Ages, pp. 785-787.

Part 3
SATAN CANNOT
CREATE LIFE**What was wrong with Satan's statement to Eve in Genesis 3:4?****"The serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die" (Gen. 3:4).**

The death of Adam and Eve showed that Satan either could not or would not prevent their death. (See Gen. 5:5.) With the opportunities offered during thousands of years, Satan has not once made a person immortal or brought one person back to life. It would be to his advantage to do so. Through spiritism he makes people think the dead are alive. This trickery witnesses to his desire to sustain his claim that Eve would not die if she disobeyed God. We must conclude that he can't give life or sustain it. The Bible claims that God alone can do this.

What lesson is taught by the efforts of magicians to duplicate the miracles of Moses and Aaron before Pharaoh? Ex. 7:10-12; 8:17, 18.

"The magicians did not really cause their rods to become serpents; but by magic, aided by the great deceiver, they were able to produce this appearance. It was beyond the power of Satan to change the rods to living serpents. The prince of evil, though possessing all the wisdom and might of an angel fallen, has not power to create, or to give life; this is the prerogative of God alone. But all that was in Satan's power to do, he did; he produced a counterfeit."—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 264.

Claims have been made by scientists and by the news media that life has been created in the laboratory. On close examination these claims have been shown to be false. Will man ever be able to create life? Claims for the creation of life may well be made in the near future which will be difficult to refute. Laboratory experimentation may produce results that are difficult to distinguish from true living organisms. In Pharaoh's court it was difficult to tell the living serpent from the counterfeit.

THINK IT THROUGH**Since Satan cannot create life, where do offensive features of nature come from?**

"Not one noxious plant was placed in the Lord's great garden, but after Adam and Eve sinned, poisonous herbs sprang up. In the parable of the sower the question was asked the Master, 'Didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? how then hath it tares?' The Master answered, 'An enemy hath done this.' All tares are sown by the evil one. Every noxious herb is of his sowing, and by his ingenious methods of amalgamation he has corrupted the earth with tares."—Ellen G. White Comments, *S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 1, p. 1086.

FURTHER STUDY*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 263-265.

Part 4
THE GREAT
SUSTAINER**What aspects of God's power are taught by the stars?**

**"Lift up your eyes on high and see:
who created these?
He who brings out their host by number,
calling them all by name;
by the greatness of his might,
and because he is strong in power
not one is missing" (Isa. 40:26, RSV).**

People often overreach themselves. They take on more jobs than they can handle. They make more promises than they can keep. They spend more money than they can earn. They have larger families than they can support. Isaiah invites us to look at the nighttime sky and assures us that God has not overreached Himself. He can care for all that He has made. The stars we can see with the naked eye on a clear night number about 2000. Isaiah assures us that because of God's power "not one is missing." And beyond our sight are countless galaxies, each with billions of stars, all sustained by our heavenly Father.

Read the story of the manna in Exodus 16:14-35. What lesson do you find related to today's topic?

"For forty years they [Israelites] were daily reminded by this miraculous provision, of God's unfailing care and tender love. In the words of the psalmist, God gave them 'of the corn of heaven. Man did eat angels' food' (Psalm 78:24, 25)—That is, food provided for them by the angels. Sustained by 'the corn of heaven,' they were daily taught that, having God's promise, they were as secure from want as if surrounded by fields of waving grain on the fertile plains of Canaan."—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 297.

What experience of king Hezekiah is evidence of the power of God to maintain life? 2 Kings 20:5, 6.

"Upon all created things is seen the impress of the Deity. Nature testifies of God. The susceptible mind, brought in contact with the miracle and mystery of the universe, cannot but recognize the working of infinite power. . . . A mysterious life pervades all nature—a life that sustains the unnumbered worlds throughout immensity, that lives in the insect atom which floats in the summer breeze, that wings the flight of the swallow and feeds the young ravens which cry, that brings the bud to blossom and the flower to fruit."—*Education*, p. 99.

THINK IT THROUGH

What experiences in my life give evidence of God's sustaining power?

FURTHER STUDY

Education, pp. 113-117.

Part 5
NO BEGINNING
—NO END

What claim does Moses make about God in Psalm 90:2?

"Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God" (Ps. 90:2).

"From everlasting to everlasting. God is from eternity in the past to eternity in the future (see Ps. 93:2; Prov. 8:23; Micah 5:2; Hab. 1:12). He is 'the Ancient of days' (Dan. 7:9). There could not be a more sublime statement of the eternity of God. The man who recognizes the eternity of God and regards his own life as related to the Eternal, has a powerful stimulus to dignified, worthy living."—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 3, p. 841.

Everything we experience begins and ends. There is no way for us even to imagine an existence without a beginning, and only a bit easier to think of no end. But the Bible affirms that God's existence has neither beginning nor ending. Where we can't investigate we can only believe, disbelieve, or withhold judgment. The Christian has chosen to believe because the evidence of the Word and his own experience in response to the Word convince him of the truth of even those biblical teachings he can neither prove nor comprehend.

If God had a beginning, it would mean that another had created Him, and that other would really be Creator. If He were to have an end, it would mean He is not able to sustain His own life; much less the everlasting life promised by the Redeemer. To be both Creator and Redeemer God must be from everlasting to everlasting.

"God always has been. He is the great I AM."—*Medical Ministry*, p. 92.

"The portions of Holy Writ presenting these great themes [the mysteries of the Bible] are not to be passed by as of no use to man. All that God has seen fit to make known we are to accept upon the authority of His word. Only a bare statement of facts may be given, with no explanation as to why or how; but though we cannot comprehend it we should rest content that it is true, because God has said it. All the difficulty lies in the weakness and narrowness of the human mind."—*Testimonies*, vol. 5, pp. 699, 700.

Who was the active Person in Creation? John 1:1-3; Col. 1:16, 17.

THINK IT THROUGH

What other truths rest upon the everlastingness of God?

"God is the eternal, uncreated Fountain of all good. All who trust in Him will find Him to be this."—*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 199.

FURTHER STUDY

Patriarchs and Prophets, pp. 34, 36.

Part 6
GIVER OF
ETERNAL LIFE

How do we receive eternal life?

"This is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life" (1 John 5:11, 12).

The atonement made possible the use of creative power for redemptive purposes. That power renews believers in the image of Jesus. At the second advent it will change the living saints, and resurrect the dead saints. Both will live forever.

"Hath the Son. To have the Son means so to believe on Him that He becomes to us all that His name implies: a Saviour, a Lord, One anointed to be our King. . . . It means to have Christ dwelling in the heart as the supremely honored Guest. . . .

"Hath life. Literally, 'hath the life,' that is, the eternal life referred to in v. 11. This life begins with the Christian's new birth, and is continued in the world to come. . . . Those who cultivate the friendship of Jesus come to share in His character. In this way, having the Son guarantees having the life that never ends."—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 677.

What is the result of knowing God and Jesus His Son? John 17:3.

Here in this world it is often to our advantage to know someone important. But if that friend falls from his position in disgrace, his difficulties could spread to us. We cannot fully understand what it means to us now and in the future to have God as our friend. Furthermore there is no danger that any change in the Godhead will ever occur. He is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

THINK IT THROUGH

When does the believer receive everlasting life?

The saved will not have within them the intrinsic ability to live eternally. Only as the eternal Creator God continues to bestow upon His created beings the gift of life can they live forever with Him.

"Christ became one flesh with us, in order that we might become one spirit with Him. It is by virtue of this union that we are to come forth from the grave,—not merely as a manifestation of the power of Christ, but because, through faith, His life has become ours. Those who see Christ in His true character, and receive Him into the heart have everlasting life. It is through the Spirit that Christ dwells in us; and the Spirit of God, received into the heart by faith, is the beginning of the life eternal."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 388.

FURTHER STUDY

Testimonies, vol. 3, pp. 365, 366.



Creation

“Thus saith the Lord, thy redeemer, and he that formed thee from the womb, I am the Lord that maketh all things; that stretcheth forth the heavens alone; that spreadeth abroad the earth by myself” (Isa. 44:24).

Genesis 1 and 2 contain the Creation story. Nonreligious people, and also much of the religious world regard this as a myth. Conservative Christians accept this account as fact.

Far-reaching doctrinal consequences result from a belief that the Creation account is not literal. The integrity of the Sabbath, which is a memorial of Creation, is dependent on an actual week of creative activity. In addition to the direct command in Exodus 20, the keeping of the Sabbath is urged both

by counsel and by example throughout the Scriptures. Jesus accepted the Creation story as literal and upheld the observance of the Sabbath. Difficulties in interpreting the Scriptures develop when the literal days of Creation are discounted. If the days of Creation were long, indefinite periods of time, the fossils could represent the remains of plants and animals that lived and died during these long periods of time. We then have problems concerning the origin of sin. The Bible account indicates that sin started with Eve. With sin came death. If the buried fossils accumulated during long, indefinite Creation days, we are confronted with evidences of death prior to Eve's creation.

The first two chapters of Genesis give us a recital of actual happenings during a one-week Creation. These chapters also tell us of God's great creative power which is the basis of worship. Because God is Creator, He is entitled to receive our worship and praise at all times, but especially on the Sabbath.

DAILY HIGHLIGHTS

1. **The Beginning**
(Gen. 1:1)
2. **The Purpose**
(Isa. 43:7)
3. **The Method of Creation**
(Ps. 33:6, 9)
4. **The Time of Creation**
(Gen. 1:31; 2:2)
5. **In His Image**
(Gen. 1:27)
6. **The Results**
(Gen. 1:31)

Part 1 **Since God is eternal, what beginning is God referring to in**
THE BEGINNING **the first verse of the Bible?**

**“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth”
(Gen. 1:1).**

Various theories and arguments have arisen over what is meant by “in the beginning.” We may speculate, and our speculation will be harmless if it is not contrary to the facts already revealed to us in the Scriptures. These include: (1) God is not indebted to preexisting matter, (2) the week of Creation was composed of literal days, and (3) the seventh day was established as a memorial of the creative activity of the previous six days.

“The divine mind and hand have preserved through the ages the record of creation in its purity. It is the word of God alone that gives to us an authentic account of the creation of our world. This word is to be the chief study in our schools.”
—*Counsels to Teachers*, p. 13.

“Genesis 1:1 affirms that God is before all else and that He is the one and only cause of all else. This verse is the foundation of all right thinking in regard to the material world. Here is set forth the impressive truth that ‘in the formation of our world, God was not indebted to pre-existing matter’ (8T 258). . . .

“No discussion of secondary questions regarding the mystery of a divine creation, either as to time or method, should be allowed to blur the fact that the real dividing line between a true and a false belief on the subject of God and the origin of our earth is acceptance or rejection of the truth set forth in this verse.”—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 1, pp. 207, 208.

How all-Inclusive Is God’s creative power? John 1:3; Isa. 44:24.

“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.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 8, pp. 258, 259.

THINK IT THROUGH

Through atomic fission matter may be changed into energy. At Creation God changed energy into matter. Do I really comprehend what it means to have a Father who is this kind of powerful God?

FURTHER STUDY

Patriarchs and Prophets, pp. 44, 45.

Part 2
THE PURPOSE**What purpose is to be served by Israel's existence?**

"Even every one that is called by my name: for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him" (Isa. 43:7).

Isaiah refers to Israel when he writes, "I have created him for my glory." That is, the people of Israel were to demonstrate the importance of God to those who didn't worship Him. The same God who brought Israel into existence created all people; and for the same purpose. Even in the unfallen society of God's plan where everyone would have worshiped Him, people would have lived to the glory of God. We, too, were created for God's glory. God receives glory whenever we make Him impressive or admirable to another person.

"God created man for His own glory, that after test and trial the human family might become one with the heavenly family. It was God's purpose to re-populate heaven with the human family, if they would show themselves obedient to His every word. Adam was to be tested, to see whether he would be obedient, as the loyal angels, or disobedient. If he stood the test, his instruction to his children would have been only of loyalty. His mind and thoughts would have been as the mind and thoughts of God. He would have been taught by God as His husbandry and building. His character would have been moulded in accordance with the character of God."—Ellen G. White Comments, *S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 1, p. 1082.

What will the person experience who accepts God as his Creator? Ps. 146:5, 6.

"Those who abide in Jesus will be happy, cheerful, and joyful in God. A subdued gentleness will mark the voice, reverence for spiritual and eternal things will be expressed in the actions, and music, joyful music, will echo from the lips; for it is wafted from the throne of God. This is the mystery of godliness, not easily explained, but nonetheless felt and enjoyed. A stubborn and rebellious heart can close its doors to all the sweet influences of the grace of God and all the joy in the Holy Ghost; but the ways of wisdom are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace. The more closely we are connected with Christ, the more will our words and actions show the subduing, transforming power of His grace."—*Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 626.

THINK IT THROUGH

As one of God's created beings, how do I presently give God glory?

FURTHER STUDY

The Ministry of Healing, p. 415; *Education*, p. 15.

**Part 3
THE METHOD
OF CREATION**

What method does the psalmist say God used to bring worlds into existence?

"By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth."

"For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast" (Ps. 33:6, 9).

"He spake, and it was done. Or simply 'he spoke, and it was,' the word 'done' being supplied; or perhaps better, 'he spoke, and it became.' 'He' is emphatic, as is indicated in the Hebrew by the use of the pronoun; God is set forth as Creator, in sharp contrast with any god that might claim creative ability. The sublimity of the language used to describe the creative acts of God is unsurpassed in literature (see Gen. 1:3, 6, 9, 11, 14, 20, 24, 26).

"Stood fast. Or, 'stood forth,' or simply 'stood,' heightening the sublime simplicity of the synonymous parallelism of this verse."—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 3, pp. 709, 710.

What other expression does David use to refer to God's creative act? Ps. 8:3.

"In the creation of man was manifest the agency of a personal God. When God had made man in His image, the human form was perfect in all its arrangements, but it was without life. Then a personal, self-existing God breathed into that form the breath of life, and man became a living, breathing, intelligent being. All parts of the human organism were put in action. The heart, the arteries, the veins, the tongue, the hands, the feet, the senses, the perceptions of the mind—all began their work, and all were placed under law. Man became a living soul. Through Jesus Christ a personal God created man and endowed him with intelligence and power."—*Testimonies*, vol. 8, p. 264.

We do not really know how God did His work. The references to God's fingers and breath in Scripture may be in part symbolic. However, the results of His work clearly reveal His great power.

THINK IT THROUGH

Do I believe that God can re-create me even though I do not know how He will do it?

"In God there is power; in Him there is strength. If they will take hold upon it, the life-giving power of Jesus will stimulate everyone who has named the name of Christ."—*Testimonies*, vol. 3, p. 473.

FURTHER STUDY

Christ's Object Lessons, "Other Lessons From Seed-sowing," pp. 80, 81.

Part 4
THE TIME
OF CREATION

What unit of time has its origin in the creation of the world?

"And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day" (Gen. 1:31).

"And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made" (Gen. 2:2).

"The weekly cycle of seven literal days, six for labor, and the seventh for rest, which has been preserved and brought down through Bible history, originated in the great facts of the first seven days."—*Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 3, p. 90.

What expressions in the Creation account strongly support the literal day interpretation? Gen. 1:5, 8.

Moses speaks of the first day, the second day, etc. He talks about the light and the darkness, the night and day, and the evening and the morning. How could he have made his Creation account say more clearly than it does that each day of Creation was a literal day? In Genesis 1 *yom* is the Hebrew word for day. Throughout the Bible when this word (*yom*) is used with an ordinal number, as in the first day, the second day, etc., it always designates a 24-hour day.

"Geologists and biologists have taught men to believe that this earth's early history covers millions of years, in which the geological formation were slowly taking shape and living species were evolving. Throughout its sacred pages the Bible contradicts this evolution theory. The belief in a divine and instantaneous creation as the result of words spoken by God stands in complete opposition to the theory held by the majority of scientists and many theologians today that the world and all upon it came into being through a slow process of evolution lasting for untold ages."—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 1, p. 211.

Those who believe that the days of Creation are not literal or that the Creation story is mythical or allegorical twist and turn the biblical Creation narrative to make it say something else. Seventh-day Adventists have been given the task of reviving belief in the Sabbath. The observance of the Sabbath provides a weekly reminder that God created the world in six days and rested on the seventh. Belief in a six-day Creation and observance of the seventh-day Sabbath reinforce each other in the believer's mind.

FURTHER STUDY *Education*, pp. 128, 129.

**Part 5
IN HIS IMAGE****What family relationship was seen in Adam's appearance?****"God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them" (Gen. 1:27).**

The words "image of God" cover a number of ideas. The most apparent are shown by the context. Man was to relate to his environment as God had related to the earth before its creation, bringing new life and order to the world. The "image of God" then meant that Adam had the ability to do, on his human level, acts that were similar to what God did on His divine level. God created life; man could procreate people. God made an orderly earth system; man could maintain order in the world. God lovingly provided for the needs of His creatures; similarly, man could direct his work with a loving purpose.

"Man was to bear God's image, both in outward resemblance and in character. Christ alone is 'the express image' (Hebrews 1:3) of the Father; but man was formed in the likeness of God. His nature was in harmony with the will of God. His mind was capable of comprehending divine things. His affections were pure; his appetites and passions were under the control of reason. He was holy and happy in bearing the image of God and in perfect obedience to His will.

"As man came forth from the hand of his Creator, he was of lofty stature and perfect symmetry. His countenance bore the ruddy tint of health and glowed with the light of life and joy. Adam's height was much greater than that of men who now inhabit the earth. Eve was somewhat less in stature; yet her form was noble, and full of beauty."—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 45.

THINK IT THROUGH**Although the cumulative effects of sin through the millennia have marred my physical nature, in what ways do I have, or not have, the image of God?**

"As the coin [in the parable] bore the image and superscription of the reigning power, so man at his creation bore the image and superscription of God. Though now marred and dim through the influence of sin, the traces of this inscription remain upon every soul. God desires to recover that soul and to retrace upon it His own image in righteousness and holiness.

"How little do we enter into sympathy with Christ on that which should be the strongest bond of union between us and Him—compassion for depraved, guilty, suffering souls, dead in trespasses and sins! The inhumanity of man toward man is our greatest sin. Many think that they are representing the justice of God while they wholly fail of representing His tenderness and His great love."—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 163.

FURTHER STUDY*The Great Controversy*, pp. 645-647.

**Part 6
THE RESULTS****How did the Creator feel about His work of Creation?**

“And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day” (Gen. 1:31). (See also verses 10, 12, 18, 21, 25.)

The creation of the world and its fascinating array of plants and animals, with man the crowning work, were the result of love in action. An artisan finds satisfaction with the results of his creative work. God experienced the same satisfaction when He saw the results of His work. Add to this satisfaction the element of love for a being created in His own image and we get a small glimpse of God's joy when He finished His work.

“The hills, mountains, and very beautiful plains, were adorned with plants and flowers, and tall, majestic trees of every description, which were many times larger, and much more beautiful, than trees now are. The air was pure and healthful, and the earth seemed like a noble palace. Angels beheld and rejoiced at the wonderful and beautiful works of God.”—*Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 3, p. 33.

How did David react to contemplation of the works of Creation? Ps. 8:3, 4.

“Next to the Bible, nature is to be our great lessonbook. But there is no virtue in deifying nature, for this is exalting the thing made above the great Master Builder who designed the work, and who every hour keeps it operating according to His appointment.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 6, pp. 185, 186.

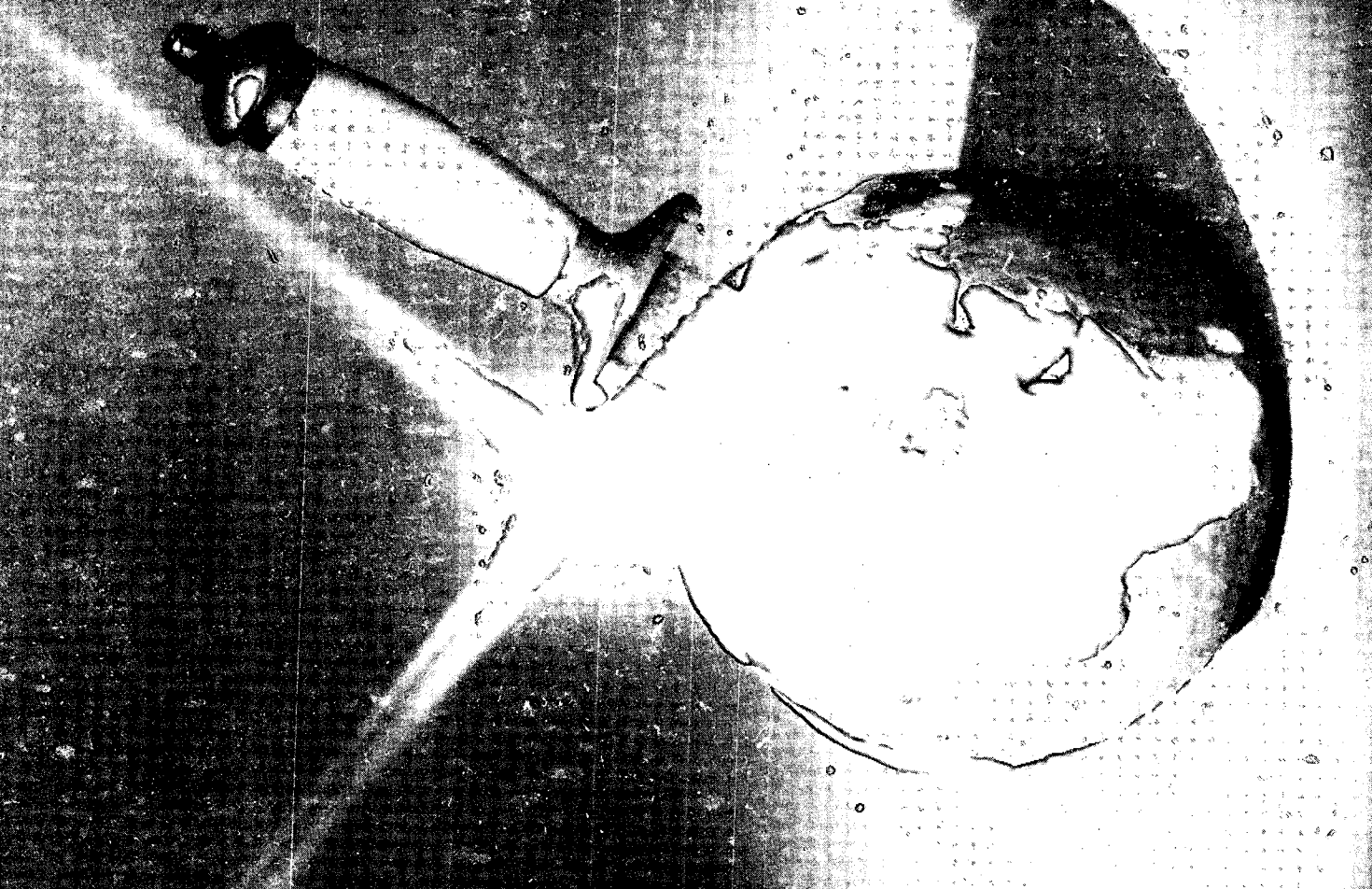
THINK IT THROUGH

The beautiful Eden home has been preserved and is still mine to enjoy if I accept God's gift of eternal life.

“‘And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there He put the man whom He had formed.’ Everything that God had made was the perfection of beauty, and nothing seemed wanting that could contribute to the happiness of the holy pair; yet the Creator gave them still another token of His love, by preparing a garden especially for their home. In this garden were trees of every variety, many of them laden with fragrant and delicious fruit. There were lovely vines, growing upright, yet presenting a most graceful appearance, with their branches drooping under their load of tempting fruit of the richest and most varied hues.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 46, 47.

FURTHER STUDY

Patriarchs and Prophets, pp. 46, 47.



The Great Controversy

"We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places" (Eph. 6:12).

The expression, "the great controversy," is well known among Seventh-day Adventists. It usually refers to a spiritual conflict between God and Satan, between the forces of good and the forces of evil. The demonstration of God's power and authority which Satan enviously desires is in God's created works. Because Lucifer was not consulted when God laid His plans to create man, he became jealous. He has since gone about corrupting God's creation. We are told that God "never made a thorn, a thistle, or a tare. These are Satan's work, the result of degeneration, introduced by him among the precious things; but it is through God's immediate agency that every bud bursts into blossom."—*Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 186.

As a result of Satan's manipulations, it is now more difficult to see clearly the evidences of creative design. Satan has produced changes that have caused men to doubt the wisdom and love of God. Philosophies have arisen that exclude creation by God as an explanation of the origin of the earth and of living things. God's children should work to correct the false impression which men have received of God through nature and to reveal to them again the loving care and ministration of the Creator to His created organisms. Sometime in the future, God's right to this earth and to man, by creation and by redemption, will be manifest to every living creature. The controversy will be settled, the wrongs will be righted, man will be restored to his original fellowship with God his Maker, and he will joyously give to his Maker the worship and adoration which rightly belong to Him.

DAILY HIGHLIGHTS

1. **Ownership of the World**
(Col. 1:16)
2. **Ownership Contended**
(Isa. 14:14)
3. **The Spiritual Controversy**
(Eph. 6:11, 12)
4. **The Physical Controversy**
(Rom. 8:22)
5. **Controversy Over Worship**
(Luke 4:5-8)
6. **The Issue of Sovereignty**
(Isa. 44:6-8)

Part 1
OWNERSHIP OF
THE WORLD

Through whom did God do the work of creation?

"By him [the Son] were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him" (Col. 1:16).

How inclusive is Jesus' work of creation? Col. 1:17.

"Four things are here asserted: 1. That Jesus Christ is the *Creator of the universe; of all things visible and invisible; of all things that had a beginning, whether they exist in time or in eternity.* 2. That whatsoever was created was created *for himself; that he was the sole end of his own work.* 3. That he was *prior to all creation, to all beings, whether in the visible or invisible world.* 4. That he is the *preserver and governor of all things; for by him all things consist.*

"Now, allowing St. Paul to have understood the terms which he used, he must have considered Jesus Christ as being truly and properly *God.*"—Adam Clarke, *Commentary*, on Col. 1:16, 17.

Of what does God claim ownership? Ps. 50:1, 10-12.

The context of this passage gives the meaning that God does not need Israel's sacrifices because everything belongs to Him already. Why is it His? He made it.

A maker owns his product unless he gives or sells it to another. God never relinquished ownership of the world, even though Satan wrested the dominion from Adam. After centuries of sin, the psalmist still wrote, "The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof" (Ps. 24:1).

In creating, God has no competitor, and He alone retains the rights of ownership.

THINK IT THROUGH

In what way does a person belong to God? In what way does he not belong?

"Our first duty toward God and our fellow beings is that of self-development. Every faculty with which the Creator has endowed us should be cultivated to the highest degree of perfection, that we may be able to do the greatest amount of good of which we are capable. Hence that time is spent to good account which is directed to the establishment and preservation of sound physical and mental health.

"Man is God's workmanship, His masterpiece, created for a high and holy purpose; and on every part of the human tabernacle God desires to write His law. . . . Every nerve and muscle, every mental and physical endowment, is to be kept pure."—*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 313.

FURTHER STUDY

The Ministry of Healing, pp. 414-417.

Part 2
OWNERSHIP
CONTENDED

What jealous desire did Lucifer develop?

"I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High" (Isa. 14:14).

"Before the fall of Satan, the Father consulted his Son in regard to the formation of man. They purposed to make this world, and create beasts and living things upon it, and to make man in the image of God, to reign as a ruling monarch over every living thing which God should create. When Satan learned the purpose of God, he was envious at Christ, and jealous because the Father had not consulted him in regard to the creation of man."—*Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 3, p. 36.

Why was it impossible for Lucifer to become like God? Because Lucifer was a created being, he could not become like the Most High who is Creator. (See Eze. 28:15.)

"Little by little Lucifer came to indulge the desire for self-exaltation. The Scripture says, 'Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness.' Ezekiel 28:17. 'Thou hast said in thine heart, . . . I will exalt my throne above the stars of God. . . . I will be like the most High.' Isaiah 14:13, 14."—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 35.

Man has never faced a situation where an object that he has made challenges him, the maker. Even the computer, despite science fiction, will never challenge man because it is merely the lifeless result (although efficient and useful) of man's creative design. God, however, now faces this problem unknown to man—the creature challenging the Creator. Lucifer, a created being, has challenged his Creator. All humans who refuse to acknowledge God as their Creator challenge Him also.

With whom did Satan appear before God? Job. 1:6, 7. What did he do there? Verses 9-11.

"After tempting man to sin, Satan claimed the earth as his, and styled himself the prince of this world. Having conformed to his own nature the father and mother of our race, he thought to establish here his empire. He declared that men had chosen him as their sovereign. Through his control of men, he held dominion over the world."—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 114, 115.

THINK IT THROUGH

Does my life confirm or deny Satan's contention that he had the right to represent the earth in the council of heaven? How?

FURTHER STUDY

The Great Controversy, pp. 518-520.

Part 3
THE SPIRITUAL
CONTROVERSY

What is of greater danger to a Christian than "flesh and blood" warriors?

"Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places" (Eph. 6:11, 12).

"There is a grand rebellion in the earthly universe. Is there not a great leader of that rebellion? Is not Satan the life and soul of every species of rebellion which he himself has instigated? Is he not the first great apostate from God? A rebellion exists. Lucifer revolted from his allegiance and makes war on the divine government. Christ is appointed to put down the rebellion. He makes this world His battlefield."—Ellen G. White Comments, *S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 4, p. 1163.

What example shows the influence on character and spirituality when Satan is not resisted? John 13:2.

"But Judas did not walk in the light so graciously permitted to shine upon him. By indulgence in sin he invited the temptations of Satan. His evil traits of character became predominant. He yielded his mind to the control of the powers of darkness, he became angry when his faults were reproofed, and thus he was led to commit the fearful crime of betraying his Master. So do all who cherish evil under a profession of godliness hate those who disturb their peace by condemning their course of sin. When a favorable opportunity is presented, they will, like Judas, betray those who for their good have sought to reprove them."—*The Great Controversy*, p. 44.

What illustration of the great controversy does Zechariah provide? Zech. 3:1, 2.

THINK IT THROUGH

Am I a brand in the fire, or am I a "brand plucked out of the fire"? Where do I stand in the controversy? How do I know?

"In a vision given in 1880 I asked, 'Where is the security for the people of God in these days of peril?' The answer was, 'Jesus maketh intercession for His people, though Satan standeth at His right hand to resist Him.' . . . As man's Intercessor and Advocate, Jesus will lead all who are willing to be led, saying, 'Follow Me upward, step by step, where the clear light of the Sun of Righteousness shines.'"—*Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 465.

FURTHER STUDY

The Great Controversy, pp. ix, x.

Part 4
THE PHYSICAL
CONTROVERSY

What have been the results of sin on the whole creation?

"We know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now" (Rom. 8:22).

As soon as Adam and Eve sinned, Satan began to destroy God's creation. Nature had reflected only love and tenderness. Now hostility and harshness began to be manifest in nature. Thus nature no longer exhibited God's perfect character. It became a mixture of love and hate, a symbol of the controversy waging beyond the sight and hearing of earth's people.

"Although we cannot explain all the details seen in what appear to be changes resulting from sin, we do know that there are, throughout nature, two conflicting forces, one tending toward beauty and perfection and the other toward degeneration and death. It is Satan's desire to bring discredit upon the Creator, to cause discomfort to man, and to support his counterfeit of the creation story by working through the laws of genetics to bring about thorns on roses, stingers on nettles, parasites, predators, and the host of other ugly and degenerative changes. The Creator, on the other hand, has given plants and animals the capacity to adapt to the crisis brought on by sin, thus counteracting in part the power of the great destroyer."—Harold G. Coffin, *Creation: Accident or Design*, p. 365.

What were the physical effects of the great controversy upon Job? Job. 2:7.

THINK IT THROUGH

Do I complain about the thorns, or do I enjoy the roses?

"The same God who guides the planets works in the fruit orchard and in the vegetable garden. He never made a thorn, a thistle, or a tare. These are Satan's work, the result of degeneration, introduced by him among the precious things; but it is through God's immediate agency that every bud bursts into blossom."—*Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 186.

"Through the agencies of nature, God is working, day by day, hour by hour, moment by moment, to keep us alive, to build up and restore us. . . . But the power working through these agencies is the power of God."—*The Ministry of Healing*, pp. 112, 113.

FURTHER STUDY

The Desire of Ages, pp. 337, 338, 341.

Part 5
CONTROVERSY
OVER
WORSHIP

In exchange for "all the kingdoms of the world" what did Satan ask of Jesus?

"The devil, taking him up into a high mountain, shewed unto him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. And the devil said unto him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it. If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Get thee behind me, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve" (Luke 4:5-8).

Why does worship belong to God alone? Rev. 14:7; 4:11.

"The duty to worship God is based upon the fact that He is the Creator and that to Him all other beings owe their existence. And wherever, in the Bible, His claim to reverence and worship, above the gods of the heathen, is presented, there is cited the evidence of His creative power. 'All the gods of the nations are idols: but the Lord made the heavens.' Psalm 96:5. 'To whom then will ye liken Me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One. Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things.' 'Thus saith the Lord that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it: . . . I am the Lord; and there is none else.' Isaiah 40:25, 26; 45:18. Says the psalmist: 'Know ye that the Lord He is God: it is He that hath made us, and not we ourselves.' 'O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord our Maker.' Psalms 100:3; 95:6. And the holy beings who worship God in heaven state, as the reason why their homage is due to Him: 'Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for Thou hast created all things.' Revelation 4:11."—*The Great Controversy*, pp. 436, 437.

If Christ had succumbed to this temptation as a quick way to settle the question of sovereignty of this world, He would have acknowledged by His act that someone other than the Creator should rule the world and be entitled to worship. How grateful we should be that the great controversy was not settled in this way.

"The true ground of divine worship, not of that on the seventh day merely, but of all worship, is found in the distinction between the Creator and His creatures. This great fact can never become obsolete, and must never be forgotten."—J. N. Andrews, *History of the Sabbath*, quoted in *The Great Controversy*, pp. 437, 438.

FURTHER STUDY

The Desire of Ages, pp. 129, 130.

Part 6
THE ISSUE OF
SOVEREIGNTY

What is the relation of God to earthly governments?

"This matter is by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the holy ones: to the intent that the living may know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men" (Dan. 4:17).

Whether people recognize it or not, God is the Supreme Power in this world. His sovereignty rests on who He is, what He knows, and what He can do. The Bible identifies Him as the original Person of the universe who has never been equaled by any later person. (See Isa. 44:6-8.) His knowledge is such that He sees the future (Isa. 42:9) and the results of any course of action. He possesses power that makes any action possible to Him. With that kind of Person any other ruler must rule only at His discretion.

"In the affairs of nations God is ever 'silently, patiently working out the counsels of His own will' (Ed. 173). At times, as with the call of Abraham, He ordains a series of events designed to demonstrate the wisdom of His ways. Again, as in the antediluvian world, He permits evil to run its course and provide an example of the folly of opposition to right principles. But eventually, as in the deliverance of the Hebrews from Egypt, He intervenes lest the forces of evil overcome His agencies for the salvation of the world."—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 4, p. 790.

What sovereignty is attributed to Jesus by Paul? Col. 2:9, 10.

"Paul is here again emphasizing that Christ is the head of all power and authority. His sovereign strength is the fountain of life. The apostle's implication is that through Christ's dwelling in us, the same victorious authority and creative power will enable us to triumph."—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 202.

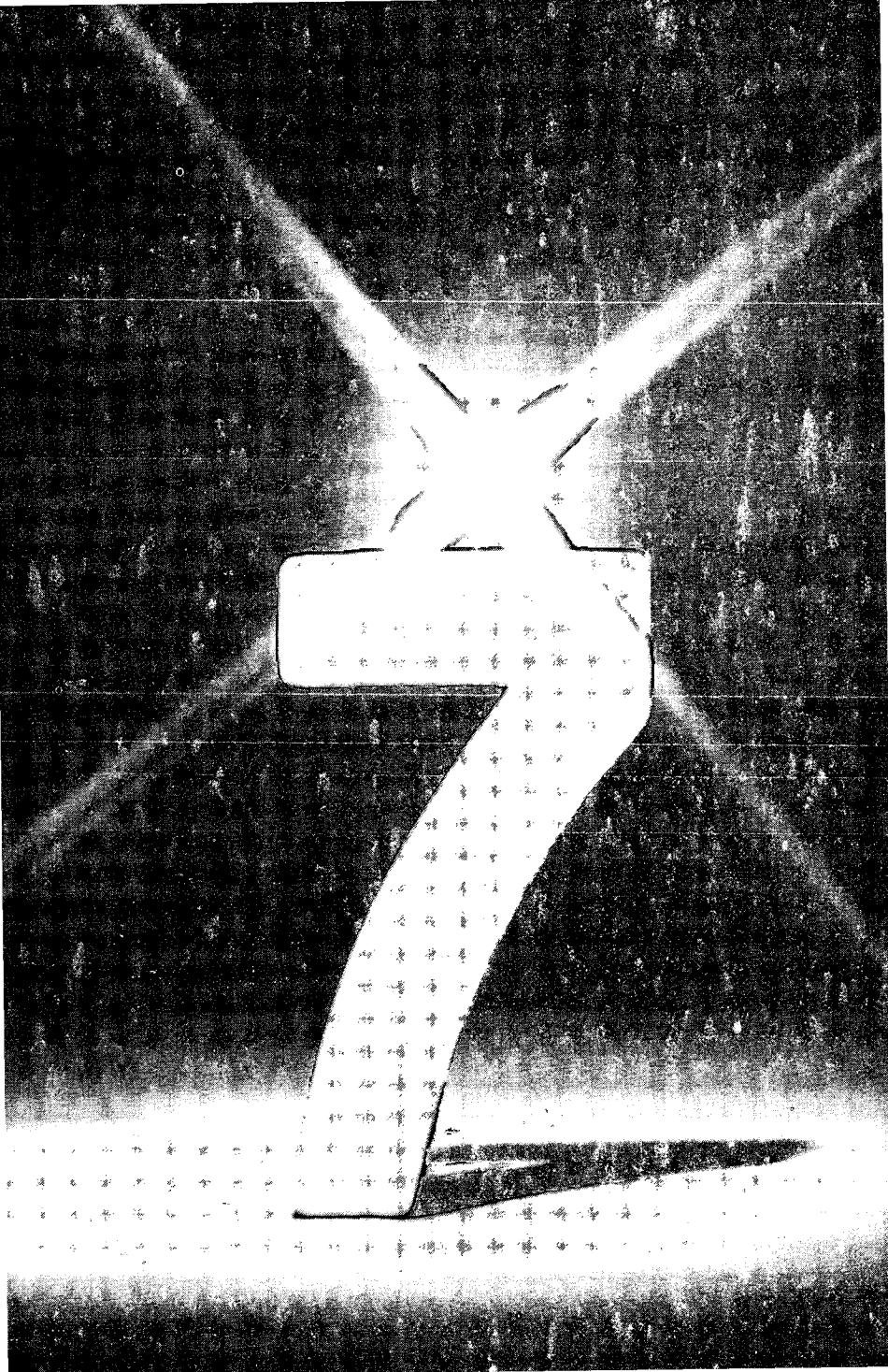
THINK IT THROUGH

In what ways is, or is not, the Lord God first and last, King in my life?

"With the sovereignty of God is bound up the well-being of man. The glory of God is the joy and the blessing of all created beings. When we seek to promote His glory we are seeking for ourselves the highest good which it is possible for us to receive. Brethren and sisters in Christ, God calls for the consecration to His service of every faculty, of every gift, you have received from Him. He wants you to say, with David: 'All things come of Thee, and of Thine own have we given Thee.'"—*Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 737.

FURTHER STUDY

Patriarchs and Prophets, pp. 288-290.



The Sabbath— A Memorial of Creation

“Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily my sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you” (Ex. 31:13).

The Sabbath distinguishes the Seventh-day Adventist Church from many other Christian groups. Too often we forget what a great influence the Sabbath has been toward helping us be the kind of Christians we should be. Sometimes the fact that the observance of the seventh-day Sabbath sets Seventh-day Adventists apart from other Christians becomes enlarged in our minds, and becomes an end in itself, a form of salvation by works. But the keeping of the Sabbath cannot save a person any more than any other works can save. If the observance of this special day does not bring us into closer fellowship with our Creator and give us greater insights into His love, power, and redeeming grace, the Sabbath will have failed to accomplish God's intentions for us.

The seventh-day Sabbath is a sign which God intends His people to carry. It is a sign which informs those who observe us that we believe in God as Creator and that this Creator God is worthy of our worship. The importance of this sign will increase as we come to the close of earth's history. Let us carry this sign not only with humility but also with responsibility and dignity in such a way that it will cause our neighbors

and those with whom we associate to desire a saving relationship with the heavenly Father.

The Creator did not need to set apart a day for rest after His work of Creation. But He saw that man would need such a day. In His loving forethought He established this day that we might be able to rest our weary bodies after the days of labor and that we might find spiritual refreshing in the contemplation of the Creator and His works.

DAILY HIGHLIGHTS

1. **The Sabbath Established**
(Gen. 2:1, 2)
2. **The Purpose**
(Eze. 20:20)
3. **The Basis of Worship**
(Neh. 9:6)
4. **A Bulwark Against Error**
(Jer. 10:14-16)
5. **God Is Creator**
(Rev. 4:11)
6. **A Sabbath for Eternity**
(Isa. 66:22, 23)

Part 1
THE SABBATH
ESTABLISHED

How was the seventh day of Creation Week different from the previous six days?

“Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made” (Gen. 2:1, 2).

“God ended . . . ; and he rested.” The seventh day of Creation Week marked the end of a process that had taken six days to complete. Yet the week is not complete without the seventh day in which God rests. God had made all things good, and now He caps them with an institution that is to be a blessing to all and a memorial of Creation. God rests, not because He is tired, obviously, but because He considers it important for all His created beings to rest after a period of endeavor. This is more than a pause that refreshes. It is a pause that recognizes the Creator and His plan and purpose to do all things well for the sake of man who was created in His image and would soon take on dominion over all the earth.

How does the writer to the Hebrews confirm the historicity of the Genesis account of God’s resting on the Sabbath? Heb. 4:4.

The seven-day week owes its origin to the week of Creation. Other divisions of the calendar are related to the motions of the moon around the earth or of the earth around the sun. But the week is not related to any physical phenomena around the planet. The cycle of six days of work followed by the seventh day of rest is the result of an example set by God Himself.

References to the Sabbath in the New Testament indicate an acceptance of the historicity of the accounts of Genesis regarding Creation and the Sabbath.

THINK IT THROUGH

Show how resting on the Sabbath does not mean ceasing from all kinds of activity.

“The Sabbath is not intended to be a period of useless inactivity. The law forbids secular labor on the rest day of the Lord; the toil that gains a livelihood must cease; no labor for worldly pleasure or profit is lawful upon that day; but as God ceased His labor of creating, and rested upon the Sabbath and blessed it, so man is to leave the occupations of his daily life, and devote those sacred hours to healthful rest, to worship, and to holy deeds.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 207.

FURTHER STUDY

Spiritual Gifts, vol. 3, pp. 90, 91.

Part 2 **Since God blessed and hallowed the Sabbath day, what are**
THE PURPOSE **we to do in regard to it?**

“And hallow my sabbaths; and they shall be a sign between me and you, that ye may know that I am the Lord your God” (Eze. 20:20).

To hallow a day is to set it apart for a holy use. This means that the normal activities of the week can be gladly laid aside on the Sabbath. After six days' work to earn a living, we gratefully make ourselves available on the seventh day for those activities that are related to worship and doing good. We joyfully find ourselves in harmony with the Genesis record and walk in the footsteps of Jesus and His disciples, who kept the Sabbath holy.

“By keeping His Sabbath holy we are to show that we are His people. His Word declares the Sabbath to be a sign by which to distinguish the commandment-keeping people. Thus God's people are to preserve among them a knowledge of Him as their Creator. Those who keep the law of God will be one with Him in the great controversy commenced in heaven between Satan and God. Disloyalty to God means contention and strife against the principles of God's law.”—*Selected Messages*, bk. 2, p. 160.

What reason does the fourth commandment give for keeping the Sabbath? Ex. 20:11.

Man is to keep the Sabbath because God in the very beginning set apart the seventh day as a day of holiness and blessing. To neglect the Sabbath is to deny the authority of God in the first instance and to reject an order that God has clearly laid down.

The seventh-day Sabbath, coming as it does once every week, reminds us regularly that our God is a great God, the Creator. When the first day of the week, which was not a memorial of Creation, was substituted for the seventh-day Sabbath, man no longer was reminded that his God is Creator. As a result, organic evolution, a basic tenet of modern philosophy, became established eventually. If man had always kept the seventh-day Sabbath, there would not now be prevalent in society this degrading belief that eliminates the Creator.

What knowledge about God brought forth praise and worship from David? 1 Chron. 29:11.

THINK IT THROUGH **How does my worship of God become more meaningful when I am reminded each Sabbath that He is Creator?**

FURTHER STUDY *Education*, pp. 250-252.

**Part 3
THE BASIS
OF WORSHIP**

For what reason do the hosts of heaven worship God?

"Thou, even thou, art Lord alone; thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their hosts, the earth, and all things that are therein, the seas, and all that is therein, and thou preservest them all; and the host of heaven worshippeth thee" (Neh. 9:6).

It is noteworthy that, of all the created beings in heaven and earth, only man dares to ignore the source of all being. All other creatures worship and praise Him, animate and inanimate, recognizing His sovereignty and power. (See Psalm 148.) Can you explain this situation?

Man, created in the image of God, should be the first to bow down before the Creator and acknowledge His greatness. Week after week, as he comes to the Sabbath, he should be reminded of the One who spoke everything into existence. In grateful acknowledgement he should bow down and worship.

What admonition does the psalmist give because God is Creator? Ps. 95:1-6.

The sovereignty of God is evident in His created works. When we look at mountains with their mass and height, when we look at the sea with its depths and turbulence, when we look at the stars and recognize the vast distances between them, we cannot help bowing down before the majesty of One who, not only brought them into being, but upholds and controls them from day to day.

THINK IT THROUGH

What are the objects that claim our attention from day to day? How can one make sure that he is worshiping the Creator rather than the creatures?

"God's claim to reverence and worship, above the gods of the heathen, is based upon the fact that He is the Creator, and that to Him all other beings owe their existence. . . . The Sabbath, as a memorial of God's creative power, points to Him as the maker of the heavens and the earth. Hence it is a constant witness to His existence and a reminder of His greatness, His wisdom, and His love. Had the Sabbath always been sacredly observed, there could never have been an atheist or an idolater."—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 336.

FURTHER STUDY

The Great Controversy, pp. 451-455.

Part 4
A BULWARK
AGAINST
ERROR

How does Jeremiah describe those who worship idols rather than the Creator?

"Every man is brutish in his knowledge: every founder is confounded by the graven image: for his molten image is falsehood, and there is no breath in them. They are vanity, and the work of errors: in the time of their visitation they shall perish. The portion of Jacob is not like them: for he is the former of all things; and Israel is the rod of his inheritance: The Lord of hosts is his name" (Jer. 10:14-16).

The Sabbath is not only a memorial of Creation; it is a bulwark against error. So long as we keep the Sabbath, so long are we saved from adopting any teaching that denies the truth of Creation as we have it recorded in Genesis 1 and 2. It also points to the Creator as the only true object of worship.

For the word "brutish" in the above text the R.S.V. uses the word "stupid." It is utter stupidity to turn to idols and worship them when they are lifeless and worthless, helpless and a work of vanity.

"The true ground of divine worship, not of that on the seventh day merely, but of all worship, is found in the distinction between the Creator and His creatures. This great fact can never become obsolete, and must never be forgotten.' —J. N. Andrews, *History of the Sabbath*, chapter 27. It was to keep this truth ever before the minds of men, that God instituted the Sabbath in Eden; and so long as the fact that He is our Creator continues to be a reason why we should worship Him, so long the Sabbath will continue as its sign and memorial. Had the Sabbath been universally kept, man's thoughts and affections would have been led to the Creator as the object of reverence and worship, and there would never have been an idolater, an atheist, or an infidel. The keeping of the Sabbath is a sign of loyalty to the true God, 'Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.' "—*The Great Controversy*, pp. 437, 438.

THINK IT THROUGH

How does Sabbath observance keep me from idolatry? Is evolution a form of idolatry?

"The Sabbath and the family were alike instituted in Eden, and in God's purpose they are indissolubly linked together. On this day more than on any other, it is possible for us to live the life of Eden. . . . In His own day He preserves for the family opportunity for communion with Him, with nature, and with one another."—*Education*, pp. 250, 251.

FURTHER STUDY

Testimonies to Ministers, pp. 134-136.

**Part 5
GOD IS
CREATOR**

What great truth do the 24 elders assert regarding God?

“Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created” (Rev. 4:11).

It is because God is before all things, the originator and upholder of all things, that He is the object of worship. Although many Christian people today believe that God is Creator, they limit His creative power. They may feel that He was responsible for the formation of the original spark of life but that He allowed it to develop by the process of evolution. What the world really needs to know today is that God created man, not by a long process of evolution, but in a moment of time, and He is able to re-create him. Only this kind of God can save us from sin and give us hope for the future.

What Bible evidence is there that the earth is not a constantly evolving entity? Gen. 2:1, 2.

“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.

THINK IT THROUGH

How far away is God from each one of us? What are the evidences of His presence? (See Acts 17:27-30.)

“If we will but listen, God’s created works will teach us precious lessons of obedience and trust. From the stars that in their trackless courses through space follow from age to age their appointed path, down to the minutest atom, the things of nature obey the Creator’s will. And God cares for everything and sustains everything that He has created. He who upholds the unnumbered worlds throughout immensity, at the same time cares for the wants of the little brown sparrow that sings its humble song without fear.”—*Steps to Christ*, pp. 85, 86.

**Part 6
A SABBATH
FOR ETERNITY**

What is God's plan concerning the observance of Sabbath in the future?

"For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain. And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the Lord" (Isa. 66:22, 23).

Just as the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was not merely a tree, but was a symbol of the recognition of God's love and authority, so the Sabbath is not only a period of time; it is a symbol of a covenant relationship between the Creator, who rested and blessed, and man made in the image of God, who also rests and blesses. When man ignores the Sabbath by deliberately rejecting its God-given role, he is virtually rejecting the authority of God and repudiating a loving relationship the Sabbath is intended to establish.

Since the loving relationship between God and His people is intended to last forever, it is not surprising that the Sabbath institution should last forever.

What will be a characteristic of those who live in the time of the Lord's coming? Rev. 14:12.

THINK IT THROUGH

What do you envisage will be the activities of the Sabbath in the earth made new?

"Now [while in Joseph's tomb] Jesus rested from the work of redemption; and though there was grief among those who loved Him on earth, yet there was joy in heaven. Glorious to the eyes of heavenly beings was the promise of the future. A restored creation, a redeemed race, that having conquered sin could never fall,—this, the result to flow from Christ's completed work, God and angels saw. With this scene the day upon which Jesus rested is forever linked. For 'His work is perfect;' and 'whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever.' Deut. 32:4; Eccl. 3:14. When there shall be a 'restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began' (Acts 3:21), the creation Sabbath, the day on which Jesus lay at rest in Joseph's tomb, will still be a day of rest and rejoicing."—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 769, 770.

FURTHER STUDY

The Desire of Ages, pp. 283, 287-289.

Uniformity or Catastrophe?

"Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation" (2 Peter 3:3, 4).

One demonstration of the inspiration of Scripture is the way in which it meets the needs and provides the counsel for each generation of the earth's inhabitants. This passage in the second epistle of Peter is applicable to our time. Not only does the text itself refer to the "last days" but the words placed in the mouths of the scoffers by Peter are in a sense a paraphrase of the modern principle of uniformity which has been the guiding rule for evolutionary geology. Geologists think that they can interpret the past by observing the geological processes in operation today. The present rate at which mountains are being eroded and valleys are filling up, etc., they say, is the rate which has been in operation throughout the indefinite past. But the Bible clearly indicates that the earth has had a dramatic origin and a catastrophic near annihilation and that it will have a fiery termination in the near future. Any believers in a philosophy based upon the continued gradual operation of geological processes are doomed to traumatic disappointment.

There has been a less rigid adherence to the concept of uniformity among geologists in the

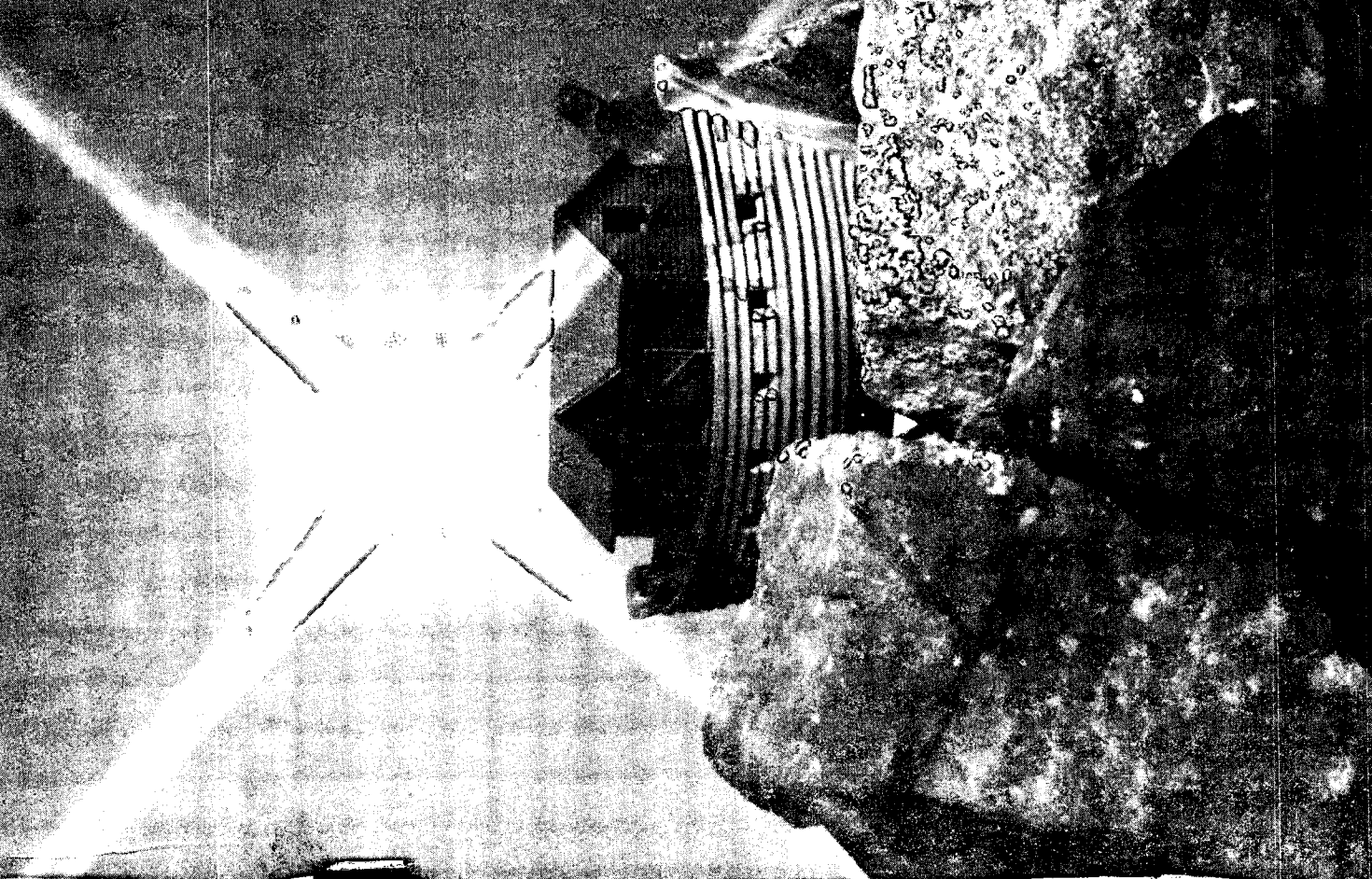
last few years. This provides an opportunity for Seventh-day Adventists and creationists to point out the catastrophic history of the earth and to warn of catastrophe in the future even as Jesus did.

Men live in fear today—fear of man-made disasters such as war and poverty. But they should also fear for physical catastrophes in the near future. God's children need, not fear, however, for in the midst of the storm they shall be protected; in the midst of catastrophe they shall stand sure.

Perhaps God's power will again be demonstrated in the formation of new worlds and living creatures. Perhaps sudden changes and unexpected creative acts will take place. But we can be certain that these will not be destructive. We can be assured of one aspect of uniformity that has been in operation in this earth and that will be in operation throughout all eternity—the uniformity of God's love, yesterday, today, and forever.

DAILY HIGHLIGHTS

1. Uniformity (2 Peter 3:3, 4)
2. Catastrophe (2 Peter 3:12)
3. Creation (2 Peter 3:5)
4. The Flood (2 Peter 3:6)
5. A Time of Judgment (2 Peter 3:7, 10)
6. New Heavens and New Earth (2 Peter 3:13)



Part 1 **What does Peter call those who apply the concept of uniformity to the past and the future?**
UNIFORMITY

"Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation" (2 Peter 3:3, 4).

Scoffers are those who reject the predictions of the prophets and the message of Jesus (2 Peter 3:2). They cannot envisage a day when the end will come and Jesus will be seen in the clouds of heaven (verse 4). The basis of their rejection is the supposition that if things have operated a certain way for a number of years, there is no reason to suppose any change will take place. They will even project this continuity into the past, and thereby set up a principle of uniformity by which they seek to explain all aspects of the universe.

The rule of uniformity has been used by geologists to interpret the past. According to them, past geological processes can be understood by examining the present. Uniformity is based on the maxim "the present is the key to the past." Because the theory of evolution requires much time to account for change, and because the principle of uniformity provides the concept of aeons of time, uniformity has become the interpretive tool for evolutionists.

THINK IT THROUGH **Why do you accept the biblical account of history rather than the concepts and theories of man?**

"I have been shown that without Bible history, geology can prove nothing. Relics found in the earth do give evidence of a state of things differing in many respects from the present. But the time of their existence, and how long a period these things have been in the earth, are only to be understood by Bible history. It may be innocent to conjecture beyond Bible history, if our suppositions do not contradict the facts found in the sacred Scriptures. But when men leave the word of God in regard to the history of creation, and seek to account for God's creative works upon natural principles, they are upon a boundless ocean of uncertainty. Just how God accomplished the work of creation in six literal days he has never revealed to mortals."—*Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 3, p. 93.

FURTHER STUDY *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 113-116.

Part 2 **What catastrophic event does the apostle Peter look forward to?**
CATASTROPHE

“Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat” (2 Peter 3:12).

In contrast to the uniformitarian belief, catastrophism claims that unnatural events have occurred in the past. These geological events cannot be understood by examining the modern world—except as the observations are related to the study of the Scriptures. The Bible contains the only accurate account of Creation and the Flood (as portrayed in vision to Moses who recorded them in Genesis). Accurate accounts of future unnatural events (conveyed in the same way to prophets in both the Old and New Testaments) have also been recorded for our warning and admonition.

“That voice shakes the heavens and the earth. There is a mighty earthquake, ‘such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great.’ Rev. 16:17, 18. The firmament appears to open and shut. The glory from the throne of God seems flashing through. The mountains shake like a reed in the wind, and ragged rocks are scattered on every side. There is a roar as of a coming tempest. The sea is lashed into fury. There is heard the shriek of the hurricane like the voice of demons upon a mission of destruction. The whole earth heaves and swells like the waves of the sea. Its surface is breaking up. Its very foundations seem to be giving way. Mountain chains are sinking. Inhabited islands disappear. The seaports that have become like Sodom for wickedness are swallowed up by the angry waters.”—*The Great Controversy*, pp. 636, 637.

In contrast to the Genesis Flood, what will cause destruction on the earth at Christ’s second coming? 2 Peter 3:12; 2 Thess. 1:8.

THINK IT THROUGH

What confidence can the Christian place in God and His Word? (See Psalm 91.)

“A marvelous change has come over those who have held fast their integrity in the very face of death. They have been suddenly delivered from the dark and terrible tyranny of men transformed to demons. Their faces, so lately pale, anxious, and haggard, are now aglow with wonder, faith, and love. Their voices rise in triumphant song: ‘God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.’ ”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 639.

FURTHER STUDY

Testimonies, vol. 9, pp. 11-18.

Part 3
CREATION

What does the apostle Peter point to as an example of an unnatural (nonuniform) event which contradicts the claim of the scoffers? Why do they disbelieve in Creation?

“In taking this view they lose sight of the fact that there were heavens and earth long ago, created by God’s word out of water and with water” (2 Peter 3:5, N.E.B.).

“There is a constant effort made to explain the work of creation as the result of natural causes; and human reasoning is accepted even by professed Christians, in opposition to plain Scripture facts. There are many who oppose the investigation of the prophecies, especially those of Daniel and the Revelation, declaring them to be so obscure that we cannot understand them; yet these very persons eagerly receive the suppositions of geologists, in contradiction of the Mosaic record. But if that which God has revealed is so difficult to understand, how inconsistent it is to accept mere suppositions in regard to that which He has not revealed!”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 113.

“The sophistry in regard to the world being created in an indefinite period of time is one of Satan’s falsehoods. God speaks to the human family in language they can comprehend. He does not leave the matter so indefinite that human beings can handle it according to their theories.”—Ellen G. White, *Letter 31*, 1898.

To be a creationist or an evolutionist is a matter of faith, since neither can be proved true. To be a creationist is to have faith in the creation account of origins, in a Creator God and in the inspiration of Scripture. To be an evolutionist is to have faith in the evolutionary account of origins, in the accuracy of the scientists’ interpretation of data, and in the ability of life to arise, unaided by intelligence, from lifelessness.

THINK IT THROUGH

How can you be saved from delusions that come upon the earth in the last days?

“The Christian is required to be diligent in searching the Scriptures, to read over and over again the truths of God’s word. Willful ignorance on this subject endangers the Christian life and character. It blinds the understanding and corrupts the noblest powers. It is this that brings confusion into our lives. Our people need to understand the oracles of God; they need to have a systematic knowledge of the principles of revealed truth, which will fit them for what is coming upon the earth and prevent them from being carried about by every wind of doctrine.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 273.

FURTHER STUDY

Education, pp. 130, 131.

Part 4
THE FLOOD **As a second example, what did the apostle Peter point to as an example of catastrophism?**

"Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished" (2 Peter 3:6).

The Genesis Flood had a profound effect on the surface of the earth and is the key to understanding geology. Most of the characteristics of the crust of the earth, the thick beds of sediments, their fossil contents, and the strong marks of erosion came about through the action of flood waters.

"Geologists claim to find evidence from the earth itself that it is very much older than the Mosaic record teaches. . . .

" . . . In the history of the Flood, inspiration has explained that which geology alone could never fathom."—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 112.

What did Jesus point to as an example of catastrophe? Matt. 24:37-39.

What future event, similar to the Flood, will surprise those unprepared? Matt. 24:39, last part.

"The solemn fact is to be kept not only before the people of the world, but before our own churches also, that the day of the Lord will come suddenly, unexpectedly. The fearful warning of the prophecy is addressed to every soul. Let no one feel that he is secure from the danger of being surprised. Let no one's interpretation of prophecy rob you of the conviction of the knowledge of events which show that this great event is near at hand."—*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 336.

THINK IT THROUGH **What evidences do you have that God's word is safer to rely on than the prognostications of scientists?**

"In Noah's day philosophers declared that it was impossible for the world to be destroyed by water; so now there are men of science who endeavor to show that the world cannot be destroyed by fire—that this would be inconsistent with the laws of nature. But the God of nature, the Maker and Controller of her laws, can use the works of His hands to serve His own purpose.

"When great and wise men had proved to their satisfaction that it was impossible for the world to be destroyed by water, when the fears of the people were quieted, when all regarded Noah's prophecy as a delusion, and looked upon him as a fanatic—then it was that God's time had come."—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 103, 104.

FURTHER STUDY *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 108-110.

**Part 5
A TIME OF
JUDGMENT**

What third example does Peter use against the uniformitarian arguments of the scoffers?

"The heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men."

"But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up" (2 Peter 3:7, 10).

"When the reasoning of philosophy has banished the fear of God's judgments; when religious teachers are pointing forward to long ages of peace and prosperity, and the world are absorbed in their rounds of business and pleasure, planting and building, feasting and merrymaking, rejecting God's warnings and mocking His messengers—then it is that sudden destruction cometh upon them, and they shall not escape."—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 104.

What power involved in creation of the earth is now preserving and maintaining the earth until the time of judgment? 2 Peter 3:5, 7.

The day of judgment referred to in verse 7 could refer to either the second coming of Christ or the time of judgment at the end of the millennium. The context suggests that Peter is thinking mostly of the second coming.

What are some of the expressions of catastrophe Peter uses in describing the "day of judgment"? Verses 10, 12.

THINK IT THROUGH

Peter poses this searching question: "Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be?" What does this really mean to me?

"When the divine Presence was manifested upon Sinai, the glory of the Lord was like devouring fire in the sight of all Israel. But when Christ shall come in glory with His holy angels the whole earth shall be ablaze with the terrible light of His presence. 'Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence: a fire shall devour before Him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about Him. He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that He may judge His people.' Psalm 50:3, 4. A fiery stream shall issue and come forth from before Him, which shall cause the elements to melt with fervent heat, the earth also, and the works that are therein shall be burned up."—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 339.

FURTHER STUDY

The Great Controversy, pp. 630-639.

**Part 6
NEW HEAVENS
AND NEW EARTH**

Despite catastrophe, what bright prospect for the future does the Christian have?

"Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness" (2 Peter 3:13).

"To dwell forever in this home of the blest, to bear in soul, body, and spirit, not the dark traces of sin and the curse, but the perfect likeness of our Creator, and through ceaseless ages to advance in wisdom, in knowledge, and in holiness, ever exploring new fields of thought, ever finding new wonders and new glories, ever increasing in capacity to know and to enjoy and to love, and knowing that there is still beyond us joy and love and wisdom infinite—such is the object to which the Christian's hope is pointing, for which Christian education is preparing. To secure this education, and to aid others to secure it, should be the object of the Christian's life."—*Counsels to Teachers*, p. 55.

In verse 5 we noticed that God's word created the earth. In verse 7, that word preserves the earth. The same word promises new heavens and new earth. We have every reason to believe God can and will keep that promise.

"Let all that is beautiful in our earthly home remind us of the crystal river and green fields, the waving trees and living fountains, the shining city and the white-robed singers, of our heavenly home—that world of beauty which no artist can picture, no mortal tongue describe. 'Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him.' 1 Corinthians 2:9."—*Counsels to Teachers*, p. 55.

What admonition is given those who look for new heavens and new earth? 2 Peter 3:14.

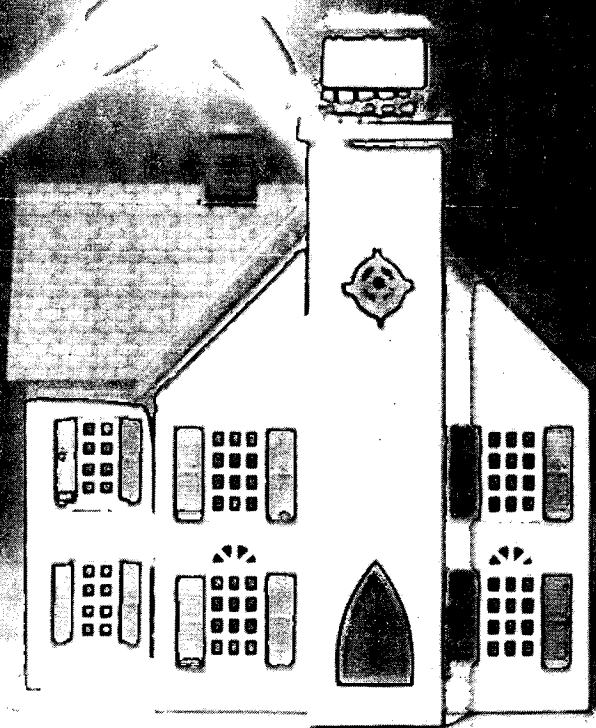
THINK IT THROUGH

When is catastrophe a blessing? To whom can it be a tragedy? When is uniformity a blessing?

"The trials to which Christians are subjected in sorrow, adversity, and reproach are the means appointed of God to separate the chaff from the wheat. Our pride, selfishness, evil passions, and love of worldly pleasure must all be overcome; therefore God sends us afflictions to test and prove us, and show us that these evils exist in our characters. We must overcome through His strength and grace."—*Testimonies*, vol. 3, p. 115.

FURTHER STUDY

Early Writings, pp. 288, 289.



Dangers to the Church

“Keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called” (1 Tim. 6:20).

The increase of false science and its influence on the populations of the world will be especially noticeable as the time of the end approaches. Miracles of healing which can be demonstrated to be valid and authentic, but which will not be the work of the Spirit of God, will become common. Claims that the creation of life has been accomplished by men in the laboratory may become more insistent. It may become as difficult to distinguish the genuine from the false as it was to separate living from nonliving serpents in Pharaoh’s court. Science will be used to prepare the people for the last, almost overpowering delusion—the imitation by Satan of the coming of Christ.

Have some members of the church been strongly influenced by the conclusions of scientists? This is not surprising. Science is impressive, it is convincing. Pronouncements in

biology, geology, or astronomy which are contrary to the Inspired Word of God may have disturbed some and raised doubts in minds. There is only one way to resolve these problems: Go to the sources of inspired truth and accept their simple and authoritative statements as God’s word for you. It may be necessary for the Christian believer sooner or later to deny what looks like strong evidence, but such a procedure can never safely be taken unless the mind is first stored with scriptural truths. The day is coming, indeed it is already here, when evidence for an age of billions of years for life upon the earth will seem sufficient to constitute proof, when a drop of gel in a test tube will appear to have all the characteristics of life, when the evolutionary development of man seems undeniable. The day is coming soon when sights in the heavens and on the earth will deceive millions. But he who searches and believes God’s inspired messages to man will not be misled. True science, which comes from God and leads to God, is not in conflict with God’s Word.

DAILY HIGHLIGHTS

1. **Doctrines of Men**
(Matt. 15:9)
2. **Worshipping Nature**
(Rom. 1:20)
3. **Forgetting God**
(Deut. 6:12)
4. **The Denial of Sin**
(Rom. 5:12)
5. **Misunderstanding
Inspiration** (2 Peter 1:12)
6. **Accepting False Science**
(Prov. 9:10)

**Part 1
DOCTRINES
OF MEN**

What is a danger religious people often face?

“In vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men” (Matt. 15:9).

It is not the religiously indifferent or the secular minded who face the danger of replacing the teachings of the Bible with human theories; it is those who recognize the importance of religion in their lives and have a form of godliness, yet fail to exercise what religion really means. They follow the outward forms, but their hearts are not in their worship. (See Matt. 15:8.)

Where does the Christian find his supreme authority and the light of truth? Ps. 119:105.

“The Bible is the most instructive and comprehensive history that has ever been given to the world. Its sacred pages contain the only authentic account of the creation. Here we behold the power that ‘stretched forth the heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth.’ Here we have a truthful history of the human race, one that is unmarred by human prejudice or human pride.”—*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, pp. 84, 85.

What was the attitude of Jesus to the Scriptures? Matt. 5:17, 18.

Give examples to show how Jesus accepted the truth and accuracy of the Scriptures as to:

- (a) the historicity of Jonah (Matt. 12:40)
- (b) the creation of man (Matt. 19:4)

It is obvious that Jesus did not look upon the Old Testament as a collection of fables.

THINK IT THROUGH

What should the Christian do when he finds a conflict between the teachings of the Bible and the so-called findings of science?

“In true science there can be nothing contrary to the teaching of the word of God, for both have the same Author. A correct understanding of both will always prove them to be in harmony. Truth, whether in nature or in revelation, is harmonious with itself in all its manifestations.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 8, p. 258.

FURTHER STUDY

Selected Messages, bk. 1, pp. 15, 16.

Part 2
WORSHIPING
NATURE

What does Paul say is obvious to the one who studies nature?

"The invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse" (Rom. 1:20).

It is illogical to suppose that the world around us is self-originating or self-perpetuating. Behind nature is nature's God, the One who made "heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein" (Acts 14:15).

There are phenomena in nature that are frightening—earthquakes, tornadoes, volcanic eruptions. You can think of others. But there are also aspects of nature that are very beautiful: the mountain peak with its cap of snow, the stream gurgling its way to the valley below, the sunset glow, and others. Impressed with these things, some people have glorified nature and worshiped it. But we need to look beyond nature to the One who controls everything by His mighty hand.

Study the following phenomena of nature that have accompanied God's activity:

(a) The Flood (Genesis 7 and 8). How far was this the work of nature, if at all?

(b) Sinai (Ex. 19:18). Do you think that a realization of the power of God in nature can lead to a healthy regard and respect for God? Why is this so?

(c) The crucifixion and resurrection (Matt. 27:51; 28:2).

"If the soldiers at the sepulcher were so filled with terror at the appearance of one angel clothed with heavenly light and strength, that they fell as dead men to the ground, how will His enemies stand before the Son of God, when He comes in power and great glory, accompanied by ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands of angels from the courts of heaven? Then the earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and be removed as a cottage."—Ellen G. White Comments, *S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 1110.

THINK IT THROUGH

What experience have you had in which you were awed by nature but recognized a God beyond?

FURTHER STUDY

Education, pp. 132-134.

Part 3
FORGETTING
GOD

What warning did Moses give to Israel?

"Beware lest thou forget the Lord, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage" (Deut. 6:12).

It was prosperity that Moses warned would lead the people to forget God. (See verses 10, 11.)

"There are many whose hearts have been so hardened by prosperity that they forget God, and forget the wants of their fellow-men. . . . Men and women who claim redemption through a Saviour's blood will squander the means intrusted to them for the saving of other souls, and then grudging dole out their offerings for religion, giving liberally only when it will bring honor to themselves. These are idolaters."—*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 57.

What question did the Lord ask about Judah's relation to Him? Isa. 51:12, 13.

Judah experienced the fear of man when they forgot God their Creator. If God made them and the world they lived in, why should they be afraid of an oppressor?

When our thoughts are filled with fear of what people will do to us, or fear of some other possible harm, then the mind is directed away from God.

"Our minds must be stayed upon God, and we must not fear the fear of the wicked, that is, fear what they fear, and reverence what they reverence, but be bold and valiant for the truth. Could our eyes be opened, we should see forms of evil angels around us, trying to invent some new way to annoy and destroy us. And we should also see angels of God guarding us from their power: for God's watchful eye is ever over Israel for good, and He will protect and save His people, if they put their trust in Him. When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord will lift up a standard against him."—*Early Writings*, p. 60.

THINK IT THROUGH

What can I do to assure my remembering God in prosperity or in trouble?

"The Lord designed that by a faithful observance of the Sabbath command, Israel should continually be reminded of their accountability to Him as their Creator and their Redeemer. While they should keep the Sabbath in the proper spirit, idolatry could not exist; but should the claims of this precept of the Decalogue be set aside as no longer binding, the Creator would be forgotten and men would worship other gods."—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 182.

FURTHER STUDY

The Desire of Ages, pp. 659-661.

Part 4
THE DENIAL
OF SIN

How does the apostle Paul describe the origin of sin?

"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned" (Rom. 5:12).

Paul did not question the historicity of the Genesis account of the creation and fall of man. By contrast, there is no place in the theory of evolution for the origin of sin. Instead of a loss of original perfection through the entrance of sin, the evolutionist sees mankind constantly improving. Evolving people have no need for the atoning blood of Jesus Christ—only sinners do.

Is man a sinner or is he not? Paul makes it clear that *all* have sinned.

How does Scripture define sin? 1 John 3:4.

There is an inherent tendency to evil in all men. They find it easy to hate, to indulge in sexual sins, to transgress the laws of health. Shall man excuse himself on the basis of environment or quirks of nature? Many do, and thus deny that sin is a deliberate choice to do evil. Some will deny that evil really exists and will talk of crime, for example, as a kind of disease which needs to be cured. It is true that diseases are rampant and man needs all the arts of medicine, but he needs more than physical treatment; he needs the saving grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

"In these scriptures [Rev. 6:12-17 and Rev. 7:9-17] two parties are brought to view. One party permitted themselves to be deceived and took sides with those with whom the Lord has a controversy. They misinterpreted the messages sent them and clothed themselves in robes of self-righteousness. Sin was not sinful in their eyes. They taught falsehood as truth, and by them many souls were led astray.

"We need now to take heed to ourselves. Warnings have been given. Can we not see the fulfillment of the predictions made by Christ and recorded in the twenty-first chapter of Luke? How many are studying the words of Christ? How many are deceiving their own souls and cheating themselves out of the blessings that others might secure if they would believe and obey? Probation still lingers, and it is our privilege to lay hold of the hope set before us in the gospel. Let us repent and be converted and forsake our sins, that they may be blotted out."—*Testimonies*, vol. 9, p. 268.

THINK IT THROUGH

Show how man can be responsible for every action of his. State why there is no excuse for sin.

FURTHER STUDY

Testimonies, vol. 5, pp. 140-142.

Part 5
MISUNDERSTANDING
INSPIRATION

What moving force was involved in the writing of Holy Scripture?

"The prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Peter 1:21).

"Although I am as dependent upon the Spirit of the Lord in writing my views as I am in receiving them, yet the words I employ in describing what I have seen are my own, unless they be those spoken to me by an angel, which I always enclose in marks of quotation."—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 37.

The Scriptures were written over a span of many years. Are they all inspired? 2 Tim. 3:16, 17.

"He [God] has not, while presenting the perils clustering about the last days, qualified any finite man to unravel hidden mysteries or inspired one man or any class of men to pronounce judgment as to that which is inspired or is not. When men, in their finite judgment, find it necessary to go into an examination of scriptures to define that which is inspired and that which is not, they have stepped before Jesus to show Him a better way than He has led us.

"I take the Bible just as it is, as the Inspired Word. I believe its utterances in an entire Bible. . . .

"Brethren, cling to your Bible, as it reads, and stop your criticisms in regard to its validity, and obey the Word, and not one of you will be lost."—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, pp. 17, 18.

THINK IT THROUGH

What shall I do about my belief in some inspired statements that have not been sustained by science?

"God is the foundation of everything. All true science is in harmony with His works; all true education leads to obedience to His government. Science opens new wonders to our view; she soars high and explores new depths; but she brings nothing from her research that conflicts with divine revelation. Ignorance may seek to support false views of God by appeals to science; but the book of nature and the written Word do not disagree; each sheds light on the other. Rightly understood, they make us acquainted with God and His character by teaching us something of the wise and beneficent laws through which He works."—Ellen G. White *Comments, S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 916

FURTHER STUDY

Selected Messages, bk. 1, pp. 16-18.

Part 6
ACCEPTING
FALSE SCIENCE

What is the basis of all true knowledge?

"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding" (Prov. 9:10).

"All true science is but an interpretation of the handwriting of God in the material world. Science brings from her research only fresh evidences of the wisdom and power of God. Rightly understood, both the book of nature and the written word make us acquainted with God by teaching us something of the wise and beneficent laws through which He works."—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 599.

How does Paul warn against a knowledge that is falsely so called? 1 Tim. 6:20.

Scientific method has its place in the pursuit of knowledge, but it is limited in scope. It can tell us much about our world; it can tell us how to travel to the moon and undertake other unbelievable projects. But it cannot tell us anything about origins; it cannot forecast the distant future. When science presumes to tell us how the world began, or what our destiny is, then science goes beyond its bounds and is immediately suspect. Only the One who created the universe can reveal when and why and how He did it. Only the Bible can speak with authority in such matters.

"There should be a settled faith in the divinity of God's holy word. The Bible is not to be tested by men's ideas of science, but science is to be brought to the test of this unerring standard. When the Bible makes statements of facts in nature, science may be compared with the written word, and a correct understanding of both will always prove them to be in harmony. One does not contradict the other."—Ellen G. White, *Signs of the Times*, March 13, 1884.

THINK IT THROUGH

Why is there a popular concept that there is a contradiction between the Bible and science? Show how the Bible has been misinterpreted in the past so as to conflict with the evidence of scientific research. What does Ellen White say about the importance of scientific knowledge?

"The college at Battle Creek was established for the purpose of teaching the sciences and at the same time leading the students to the Saviour, whence all true knowledge flows. Education acquired without Bible religion is disrobed of its true brightness and glory. . . . The great object in the establishment of our college was to give correct views, showing the harmony of science and Bible religion."—*Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 274.

FURTHER STUDY

Testimonies, vol. 8, pp. 257-261.

Trust in the Creator

"Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matt. 6:33).

Those who truly believe that God is Creator will not worry. The true follower of Christ finds among the beauties of nature a peace of mind, a strength, and a calmness that help to sustain him. Is this not due to the fact that he sees in the created things his heavenly Father's power and ability to sustain him? Is this not why Jesus pointed to the things of nature as evidences of God's care and reasons why we should trust Him?

"All who have chosen God's service are to rest in His care. Christ pointed to the birds flying in the heavens, to the flowers of the field, and bade His hearers consider these objects of God's creation. 'Are not ye of much more value than they?' He said. Matt. 6:26, R.V. The measure of divine attention, bestowed on any object is proportionate to its rank in the scale of being. The little brown sparrow is watched over by Providence. The flowers of the field, the grass that carpets the earth, share the notice and care of our heavenly Father. The great Master Artist has taken thought for the lilies, making them so beautiful that they outshine the glory of Solomon. How much more does He care for man, who is the image and glory of God."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 313.

Since God has done and is doing so much for us, it is obvious that we should respond by seeking first "the kingdom of God, and his righteousness." This means that we

look upon the affairs of this world as taking a secondary place in our lives, and we devote every energy to accomplishing God's plans and purposes for us.

DAILY HIGHLIGHTS

1. **His Power to Sustain**
(Matt. 6:25)
2. **His Care for His Creatures**
(Matt. 6:26)
3. **His Love of Beauty**
(Matt. 6:28-30)
4. **His Provision [of Work]**
(Gen. 2:15)
5. **His Provision of Life's Necessities**
(Matt. 6:31, 32)
6. **Man's First Concern**
(Matt. 6:33, 34)



**Part 1
HIS POWER
TO SUSTAIN**

How does Jesus show that the One who created us will also provide for our living?

"Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?" (Matt. 6:25).

"He who has given you life knows your need of food to sustain it. He who created the body is not unmindful of your need of raiment. Will not He who has bestowed the greater gift bestow also what is needed to make it complete?"—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 95.

What two examples from the Old Testament show God's power to sustain? 1 Kings 17:3, 6, 14-16.

Many question the miracles performed in Elijah's day, but in so doing they are denying God's power to sustain life by other than normal means. God does not always work a miracle to provide our needs, but it is assuring to know that if this is necessary He will not fail to do so.

What example from the New Testament is an illustration of creative power operating to provide sustenance for man? John 6:5-13.

It is significant to note that in the above miracles God makes use of what is already available: The widow had a jar of oil; the disciples found five loaves and two fishes. God takes what man has to offer and multiplies it according to need.

God is no less powerful today than He was in the days of old. Modern life may be different, but our needs are just as real, and God's power is just as effective.

THINK IT THROUGH

How often have you found your needs met in an outstanding way by a loving heavenly Father? Be prepared to recount your experience to the class. What is the basis of trust in God?

"Not because we see or feel that God hears us are we to believe. We are to trust in His promises. When we come to Him in faith, every petition enters the heart of God. When we have asked for His blessing, we should believe that we receive it, and thank Him that we *have* received it. Then we are to go about our duties, assured that the blessing will be realized when we need it most. When we have learned to do this, we shall know that our prayers are answered."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 200.

FURTHER STUDY

Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing, "The True Motive in Service" (Matt. 6:25), pp. 95-98.

**Part 2
HIS CARE FOR
HIS CREATURES**

What example does Jesus give that should encourage us to trust Him for daily food?

“Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?” (Matt. 6:26).

Birds were not considered to be of very great value in Bible times. (See Matt. 10:29.) Yet God cares for them. They are dependent for their food on what God has provided. Further, some birds have the ability to navigate accurately over long distances. Part of their ability to find their way seems to stem from their observations of the starry sky. The physiology of the animal may also be involved. In the springtime a certain star configuration in the sky may cause the bird to migrate toward the north. In the fall the same birds would respond in the opposite direction to the same or another star pattern. The improbability that this type of behavior could arise through natural selection and survival of the fittest is staggering.

The study of birds and animals is full of examples of God's protecting care. This is not to deny the preying habits of one creature on another, but to recognize that all creatures have built-in instincts that warn of danger and make for survival.

What comparison of values does Jesus make to help us learn to trust Him? Luke 12:6, 7.

THINK IT THROUGH

Why is it that many Christians worry? What is the antidote to worry?

“When we take into our hands the management of things with which we have to do, and depend upon our own wisdom for success, we are taking a burden which God has not given us, and are trying to bear it without His aid. We are taking upon ourselves the responsibility that belongs to God, and thus are really putting ourselves in His place. . . . But when we really believe that God loves us and means to do us good we shall cease to worry about the future. We shall trust God as a child trusts a loving parent. Then our troubles and torments will disappear, for our will is swallowed up in the will of God.”—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 100, 101.

“Let the fresh blessings of each new day awaken praise in our hearts for these tokens of His loving care.”—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 253.

FURTHER STUDY

Testimonies, vol. 2, pp. 496, 497.

Part 3
HIS LOVE
OF BEAUTY

What contrast does Jesus draw between the clothing of a king and the beauty of living plants?

“Why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lillies of the field, how they grow; they toll not, neither do they spin: and yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?” (Matt. 6:28-30).

The objects which man makes, no matter how careful he may be, will always show crudeness and lack of perfection, especially if viewed under magnification. The objects that God created always reveal greater and more perfect detail under magnification.

“Christ pointed His disciples to the flowers of the field, growing in rich profusion and glowing in the simple beauty which the heavenly Father had given them, as an expression of His love to man. . . . The most gorgeous attire produced by the skill of art cannot bear comparison with the natural grace and radiant beauty of the flowers of God’s creation. . . . If God, the divine Artist, gives to the simple flowers that perish in a day their delicate and varied colors, how much greater care will He have for those who are created in His own image?”—*Steps to Christ*, pp. 123, 124.

What was Solomon’s glory like? 2 Chron. 9:17-22.

There is nothing wrong with wealth in itself. But we are not to covet what we do not have; nor forget to give glory to God for what we have.

In Matthew 6:28-30 Jesus makes a striking contrast between clothing artificially made and the natural beauty of flowers in the field. God is a lover of the beautiful. It is not a question of how long that beauty is to last; many plants live and bloom for only a short time. God intends that everything shall be beautiful, and we may be sure that He intends that our lives shall be beautiful too.

We may seek to adorn ourselves with silks and satins, and make ourselves attractive with perfumes and color, but there is no beauty so appealing as that which comes from the hand of the Creator in terms of a meek and gentle and loving spirit, a whole and healthy personality which comes from the re-creative activity of God in the life.

THINK IT THROUGH

How can I give glory to God for everything that I own and for all the beautiful experiences of life?

FURTHER STUDY

Counsels to Teachers, pp. 185, 186.

Part 4
HIS PROVISION
OF WORK

What responsibility of stewardship did God place upon Adam in Eden?

"The Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it" (Gen. 2:15).

Just as the Creator cares for His creation, so man, created in His image, has the responsibility of caring for that which has been placed under his dominion.

"In the laws which God gave for the cultivation of the soil, He was giving the people opportunity to overcome their selfishness and become heavenly-minded. Canaan would be to them as Eden if they obeyed the Word of the Lord. Through them the Lord designed to teach all the nations of the world how to cultivate the soil so that it would yield healthy fruit, free from disease. The earth is the Lord's vineyard, and is to be treated according to His plan."—Ellen G. White *Comments, S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 1, p. 1112.

Modern man lives in a materialistic society. He somehow feels that happiness is directly proportional to the wealth that he possesses. Jesus taught that we are stewards and that happiness comes when we use our possessions to bring blessings to others.

How did Jesus describe the man who thought he could stop working and just enjoy his leisure? Luke 12:16-21.

"By the parable of the foolish rich man, Christ showed the folly of those who make the world their all. This man had received everything from God. . . . The Lord had caused vegetation to flourish, and the fields to bring forth abundantly. . . . His barns were full to overflowing, and he had no place to put the surplus of his harvest. He did not think of God, from whom all his mercies had come. He did not realize that God had made him a steward of His goods that he might help the needy. He had a blessed opportunity of being God's almoner, but he thought only of ministering to his own comfort."—*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 256.

What plan to prevent materialism and selfishness did God establish with Israel? Ex. 23:10, 11.

THINK IT THROUGH

How can the Christian show that he considers himself a steward rather than the owner of properties placed in his hand?

FURTHER STUDY

Christ's Object Lessons, "Gain That Is Loss," pp. 252-259.

**Part 5
HIS PROVISION
OF LIFE'S
NECESSITIES**

Why should the Christian not be concerned about food and drink?

"Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things" (Matt. 6:31, 32).

"Our Lord adapts Himself to our special needs. He is a shade on our right hand. He walks close by our side, ready to supply all our necessities. He comes very near to those who are engaged in willing service for Him. He knows every one by name. O what assurances we have of the tender love of Christ."—Ellen G. White Comments, *S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 3, p. 1153.

How do I know that the Christian's lack of concern for food and drink does not mean that he will eat anything and everything? Gen. 2:16, 17; 9:3, 4; Leviticus 11.

It is only reasonable that he who designs a machine is the one best qualified to know what is needed to operate and maintain it. Our heavenly Father created us. Surely He will know what is needed and will see that His creation is supplied with the necessities for proper function and maintenance if we cooperate.

THINK IT THROUGH

If God knows that we need food and drink, why should we pray, "Give us this day our daily bread"?

"It is a part of God's plan to grant us, in answer to the prayer of faith, that which He would not bestow did we not thus ask."—*The Great Controversy*, p. 525.

"The first half of the prayer Jesus has taught us is in regard to the name and kingdom and will of God—that His name may be honored, His kingdom established, His will performed. When you have thus made God's service your first interest, you may ask with confidence that your own needs may be supplied. If you have renounced self and given yourself to Christ you are a member of the family of God, and everything in the Father's house is for you. All the treasures of God are open to you, both the world that now is and that which is to come. The ministry of angels, the gift of His Spirit, the labors of His servants—all are for you."—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 110.

FURTHER STUDY

Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing, "The Lord's Prayer" (Matt. 6:11), pp. 110, 111.

Part 6
MAN'S FIRST
CONCERN

If we make God first in our lives, what can we expect?

"Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof" (Matt. 6:33, 34).

It is very easy to be mixed up in our priorities, to place the temporal over the eternal or the secular over the spiritual. That which is closest at hand seems to occupy our time and attention. But we must look beyond the immediate, to the One who has placed us here, and to the purpose for which we are alive. There is a great controversy on, and we must do our part to hasten God's kingdom. We must not settle down to the affairs of this world as though we had an abiding city here. The Christian can safely lean upon God to supply his needs even when he has lost all in famine or disaster.

Why can we rest assured that God can back up His promise to take care of our material needs if we place Him first? Ps. 50:10-12.

"The word of God has much to say in regard to sacrificing. Riches are from the Lord and belong to Him. 'Both riches and honor come of Thee.' 'The silver is Mine, and the gold is Mine, saith the Lord of hosts.' 'For every beast of the forest is Mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills.' 'The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.' It is the Lord thy God that giveth thee power to get wealth.

"Riches are in themselves transient and unsatisfying. We are warned not to trust in uncertain riches. 'Riches certainly make themselves wings; they fly away.' 'Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal.'—*Testimonies*, vol. 3, p. 549.

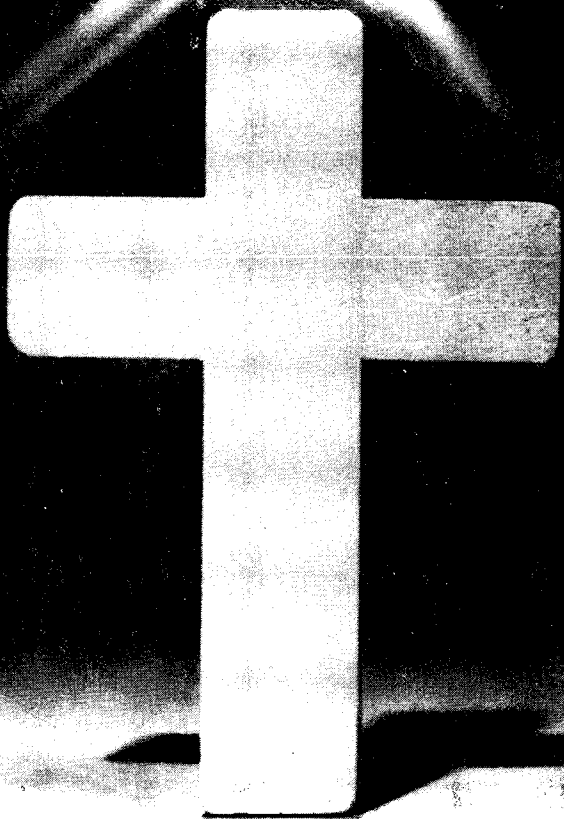
THINK IT THROUGH

How can I stop worrying about my situation and show trust in my Creator's ability to provide my needs?

"Worry is blind, and cannot discern the future; but Jesus sees the end from the beginning. In every difficulty He has His way prepared to bring relief. Our heavenly Father has a thousand ways to provide for us, of which we know nothing. Those who accept the one principle of making the service and honor of God supreme will find perplexities vanish, and a plain path before their feet."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 330.

FURTHER STUDY

Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing, "The True Motive in Service," (Matt. 6:33, 34), pp. 98, 99.



The Creator and Re-creator

“A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them” (Eze. 36:26, 27).

Conversion is often referred to as a miracle of life. This is true because a converted man is a man whose life is given a whole new direction. There can be no permanent work done in the life of the sinner unless God's creative power is allowed to work. Because God is Creator, He has the ability to make within the life the necessary changes which we call conversion.

The nominal churches whose members believe in evolution have made God too small. They often do not see Him as able to do the work necessary to restore the spiritual image of man. What the modern world needs is a great God who has power to transform the life.

Unless rebirth occurs, unless we are born again, we cannot be saved. But this is not just a one-time experience; it is a daily occurrence.

“Consecrate yourself to God in the morning; make this your very first work. Let your prayer be, ‘Take me, O Lord, as wholly Thine. I lay all my plans at Thy feet. Use me today in Thy service. Abide with me, and let all my work be wrought in Thee.’ This is a daily matter. Each morning consecrate yourself to God for that day. Surrender all your plans to Him, to be carried out or given up as His providence shall indicate. Thus day by day you may be giving your life into the hands of God, and thus your life will be molded more and more after the life of Christ.”—*Steps to Christ*, p. 70.

DAILY HIGHLIGHTS

1. **The Miracle of Conversion**
(Eze. 36:26, 27)
2. **The Necessity of Rebirth**
(John 3:3-7)
3. **The Work of the Spirit**
(John 3:8)
4. **Symbols of Creative Power**
(John 4:14)
5. **Victory Through Faith**
(1 John 5:4)
6. **The Danger of Pretense**
(2 Tim. 3:1, 5)

Part 1
THE MIRACLE
OF CONVERSION

Because of sin, what creative work must God perform on the repentant person?

"A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them" (Eze. 36:26, 27).

The miracle of conversion is a miracle of the heart, or more accurately, of the mind. What does God do to the mind to create new desires and aspirations? What kind of programming is involved to change the controlling center of the body so that the life is changed? Only the One who made us in the first place can fully answer these questions.

We may not be able to explain conversion, but we cannot deny that it has taken place either in our lives or in the lives of others. There has been a complete change in direction. Whereas we once loved to break the law, now we find ourselves living in harmony with the law. Whereas at one time we were concerned only with ourselves, now we find our thoughts and affections going out to others. At one time we were in the bondage of sin; now we find ourselves free to enjoy all that is high and noble, pure and beautiful. All this is nothing short of a miracle because it represents a change contrary to our fallen nature.

How did the psalmist express his desire for re-creation? Ps. 51:10.

It is wonderful to think that a change of heart is only a prayer away! Only the Creator can effect the changes in heart and mind that are necessary; but we are assured that there is nothing the Creator would rather do than to erase the effects of sin, remake us in the image of God, and bring us back to the perfection in which Adam was originally created.

THINK IT THROUGH

What changes took place in your life when you experienced conversion?

"You have confessed your sins, and in heart put them away. You have resolved to give yourself to God. Now go to Him, and ask that He will wash away your sins and give you a new heart. Then believe that He does this *because He has promised.*"—*Steps to Christ*, pp. 49, 50.

FURTHER STUDY

Christ's Object Lessons, "Like Unto Leaven," pp. 98-102.

Part 2
THE NECESSITY
OF REBIRTH

What surprising message did Jesus give Nicodemus?

“Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother’s womb, and be born? Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again” (John 3:3-7).

Nicodemus knew the meaning of being born again. What he couldn’t see was how it applied to him—a Jew of devotion and of considerable age. But Jesus insists on the necessity of Nicodemus’ rebirth and points out that a life of rectitude, however noble (as was no doubt the case with Nicodemus himself), was no substitute for a denial of man’s righteousness and the acceptance of the miracle of God’s grace in the heart. Man cannot enter the kingdom of heaven without being re-created, renouncing the family of fallen man and entering into the family of God.

Being “born of water” refers to the experience of baptism. The old man of sin dies within us when we turn to Christ. (See Rom. 6:3, 4.)

Being “born of the spirit” means that we no longer walk after the dictates of the flesh, but after the mind of the Spirit. (See Rom. 8:5-11.)

The conversation of Jesus with Nicodemus made two things perfectly clear: (1) that a man cannot enter the kingdom merely by being good; (2) that a man must accept and experience the redeeming grace of God to enter the kingdom.

What is the mode of life after being born again? 1 John 3:9; 5:18.

The laws of genetics seem to work in the spiritual world as effectively as they do in the natural. Just as a child takes after his parents in build and appearance and habits of mind, so the child of God, being born from above, develops the characteristics of his heavenly Father. He is kind and loving; he keeps the commandments. He no longer continues in the way of his forefathers in the flesh, sinning and sinning again, because, he has, as it were, a new set of genes.

THINK IT THROUGH

What are the results of spiritual rebirth in my life?

FURTHER STUDY

The Desire of Ages, pp. 168-177.

Part 3
THE WORK OF
THE SPIRIT

What illustration does Jesus use to show that the work of the Holy Spirit is mysterious?

“The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit” (John 3:8).

Wind is a mighty power whose effect can be seen and felt, but is itself invisible to the human eye. So is the work of the Spirit, says Jesus. The Spirit comes and goes; it chooses its own time and purpose, its own power and effect. Just as man cannot control the wind, so he cannot begin to control the Spirit. He must wait and see and hear, for it is God who takes the initiative.

The power of the Holy Spirit, we are told, is working for man's salvation. It is possible to resist the Spirit, to grieve the Spirit, and thus cause the Spirit to go away. Man has freedom to choose what he will do in this regard. But when a man decides to yield to the influences of God's Spirit, there comes into his life a force and a power that is re-creative. He is a new creature: Old things have passed away; everything becomes new. In this rebirth there is an element of mystery that we cannot fathom.

With all the progress that science has made today, we still stand in awe before the mystery of life. We have made tremendous progress in analyzing the structure of every particle of life. Our microscopes have revealed in great detail the smallest parts of human anatomy. But still we cannot explain the mystery of life. Unless the God who created us and put all things together comes to explain things to us, we shall stand in ignorance, admitting our failure, and bowing before God's omniscience. If this is true in the physical realm, need it surprise us if the means of the spiritual rebirth remains partially hidden?

THINK IT THROUGH

What are the differences between physical birth and spiritual rebirth?

“The old nature, born of blood and the will of the flesh, cannot inherit the kingdom of God. The old ways, the hereditary tendencies, the former habits, must be given up; for grace is not inherited. The new birth consists in having new motives, new tastes, new tendencies. Those who are begotten unto a new life by the Holy Spirit, have become partakers of the divine nature, and in all their habits and practices they will give evidence of their relationship to Christ.”—Ellen G. White Comments, S.D.A. Bible Commentary, vol. 6, p. 1101.

FURTHER STUDY

Steps to Christ, “Growing Up Into Christ,” pp. 67, 68.

**Part 4
SYMBOLS
OF CREATIVE
POWER**

How did Jesus contrast the water of a well with the water that He could give?

“Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life” (John 4:14).

Just as adequate water and food are necessary for this present life, so provision has been made for the Christian to partake of spiritual water and food. Three elements are presented in this part of the lesson: (1) water, (2) bread, (3) fruits from the tree of life.

It is interesting to note that man cannot do without water for more than three days. He can last without food for many days, but if his body is dehydrated he develops a fever and dies.

What did John the revelator say he saw in the New Jerusalem? Rev. 22:1.

Water is a symbol of God's creative and sustaining power. Even in the earth made new there is a river gushing from the throne of God and of the Lamb, a symbol of man's dependence upon God, and God's constant provision for man's needs.

What article of food did Jesus say He symbolized? John 6:35.

Bread used to be called the staff of life, but in our modern diet it occupies a less important role than in the past. Nevertheless, a loaf of whole wheat bread is very nutritious and satisfying.

What important tree exists in heaven? Rev. 22:2.

Fruit from the tree of life! Freshly gathered fruits are very appealing. They are usually juicy, sweet, and appetizing. They are easily digested and deliciously complement one's diet.

THINK IT THROUGH

How will immortality be sustained in the new earth?

“The fruit of the tree of life in the Garden of Eden possessed supernatural virtue. To eat of it was to live forever. Its fruit was the antidote of death. Its leaves were for the sustaining of life and immortality. . . .

“After the entrance of sin, the heavenly Husbandman transplanted the tree of life to the Paradise above; but its branches hang over the wall to the lower world. Through the redemption purchased by the blood of Christ, we may still eat of its life-giving fruit.”—Ellen G. White Comments, *S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, pp. 988, 989.

FURTHER STUDY

Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing, “The Lord's Prayer,” (Matt. 6:11), pp. 110-113.

**Part 5
VICTORY
THROUGH
FAITH**

What victory is promised to him that is born of God?

"Whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith" (1 John 5:4).

Faith is a relationship of trust. When we place our trust in God, we can overcome the world, because He who is on our side is greater than he that is against us. We need not fear what men can do to us, because our lives are in God's hands.

"The only faith that will benefit us is that which embraces Him as a personal Saviour; which appropriates His merits to ourselves. Many hold faith as an opinion. Saving faith is a transaction by which those who receive Christ join themselves in covenant relation with God."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 347.

How can we obtain this faith which leads to victory? 1 John 5:1, first part.

Faith is an attitude to Jesus; it is a belief that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God. (See Matt. 16:16). But this insight is not the result of human intuition; it is evidence that God has been at work in the life of the individual. (See Matt. 16:17.) Paul points out that the confession of Jesus as Lord and Christ can come only through the influence of the Holy Spirit. (See 1 Cor. 12:3.)

"When we seek to gain heaven through the merits of Christ, the soul makes progress. Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, we may go on from strength to strength, from victory to victory; for through Christ the grace of God has worked out our complete salvation."—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 364.

THINK IT THROUGH

How does belief in God and Jesus Christ affect the daily life of the converted person?

When we come to know what Jesus has done for us; when we believe and accept Him as our personal Saviour, we cannot help but love Him. God's love for us creates a response of love. And how do I know that I love Him? When I keep His commandments. (See 1 John 5:3.)

"Faith in the word of God and in the power of Christ to transform the life will enable the believer to work His works and to live a life of rejoicing in the Lord.

"Again and again I have been instructed to say to our people: Let your faith and trust be in God."—*Testimonies*, vol. 9, p. 279.

FURTHER STUDY

Gospel Workers, pp. 259-261.

**Part 6
THE DANGER
OF PRETENSE**

What characteristic of religious life will be apparent in the last days, and what power will be denied?

"This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come."

"Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away" (2 Tim. 3:1, 5).

It is very easy to maintain an outward display of religiosity. Since people cannot always read our thoughts or feelings, we can get away with the outward display and hope for the best. But Scripture warns us that a form of godliness will not save; that in the last days there will be many members of the church who will pretend to be good, when in reality they are not. Are we at grips with the reality, or are we deceived and deceiving by a show of Christian piety?

In the last days there will be more than a spirit of hypocrisy rampant. Some will deny that there is any other form of religious experience possible. Many will suggest that the Christian is one who pretends that certain doctrines are true, when in fact they are not; that a consistent Christian experience is beyond the capacity of the average church member so why try; that to renounce the world in its entirety is fanaticism and must be avoided. Many deny the existence of a power from God to enable the believer to live above the world and in harmony with God's law. From such teaching we are to turn away.

What happens when people turn away from the worship of the true God? Ex. 32:7, 8.

"A religion that permits men, while observing the rites of worship, to devote themselves to selfish or sensual gratification, is as pleasing to the multitudes now as in the days of Israel. And there are still pliant Aarons, who, while holding positions of authority in the church, will yield to the desires of the unconsecrated, and thus encourage them in sin."—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 317.

THINK IT THROUGH

What do I do when I do not feel religious, when I feel I would rather do something wrong?

The solution to a mood of indifference in religious matters is not found in pretense. We must go back to the Source of spiritual life and ask to be recreated. Read Psalm 51:10. This is a prayer that God will never refuse to answer.

There is no excuse for hypocrisy; nor is there any virtue in it. Notice in Revelation 3:18 what God says is the solution to the lukewarm Laodicean experience.

FURTHER STUDY

Early Writings, pp. 273, 274.

The Creator's Last Call

"Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters" (Rev. 14:7).

The developing interest in the topic of Creation, seen in the controversies over the teaching of Creation in public schools and in the proliferation of journals and societies devoted to the study and promotion of Creation, should be of great interest to Seventh-day Adventists.

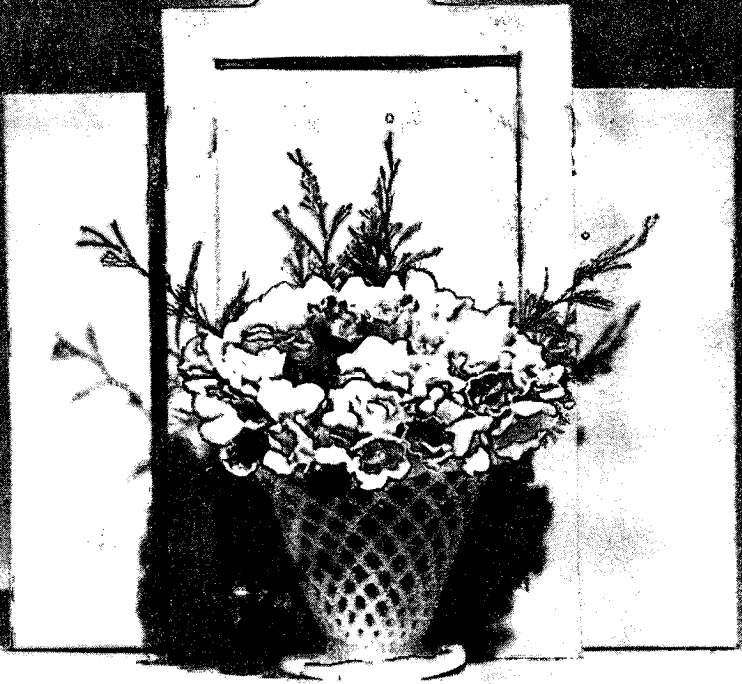
Two of the three messages proclaimed by the angels in Revelation 14 have a very direct bearing upon the topic of Creation and God as Creator. Since it is our belief that the messages of these three angels will constitute in the time of the end an important and widespread religious call to return to the worship of God, we watch with interest and satisfaction the present fulfilling of the predictions concerning the loud cry of these three messages.

Seventh-day Adventists understand that the Sabbath, the day that is set aside for the worship of God, will be the central point of religious controversy just before the second coming of Christ. Since the Sabbath is so intimately connected with the Creation event, it is obvious that no real issue concerning Saturday and Sunday can develop or be resolved without a renewed study of the

creative power of God as demonstrated in the Creation of this world.

DAILY HIGHLIGHTS

1. **The Caller**
(Rev. 1:8, 18)
2. **Lines of Communication**
(Rev. 1:1)
3. **Worship of the Creator**
(Rev. 14:7)
4. **The Fall of Babylon**
(Rev. 14:8)
5. **Beast, Image, and Mark**
(Rev. 14:9, 10)
6. **The Secret of Victory**
(Rev. 15:2-4)



Part 1
THE CALLER

How does the Lord describe Himself to John the Revelator?

"I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty."

"I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death" (Rev. 1:8, 18).

The authority behind the revelations given to John is God Himself (Rev. 1:1). But we cannot think of God without reference to Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. In other words, the three Persons of the Godhead are involved in communicating with the church through the apostle and prophet.

The description of the Lord is impressive and comprehensive. The use of the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet (Alpha and Omega) indicates to Greek readers the entirety of a thing; there is nothing beyond, before, or after. In other words, God is the Lord of all history, and from the time it began to the time that it shall end, and all the period in between.

In the days of John such an affirmation would come with telling force because of the political powers that were opposing the church. In our own day, when so many voices clamor for attention, it is important to note that there is one voice that must be heard above all others, the voice of God Himself.

What other terms are used to describe the Source of information and warning to man? Rev. 3:14.

The Amen: This term from the Hebrew suggests truthfulness and faithfulness (see Isa. 65:16, where the "God of truth" is in the Hebrew, the God of Amen). Christians use this word at the end of a prayer, or the close of an assertion, to indicate approval or finality. In this context the meaning seems to be that Jesus places His seal of finality on the purposes of God; that He is their guarantor and executor. Contrast the fickleness of man and the faithlessness of the Laodicean church.

The beginning of the creation of God: This refers to Jesus as the Source of Creation; the One who brought all things into being. (See John 1:3.)

THINK IT THROUGH

In the light of the source of the warnings that come in the book of Revelation, what reasons would you give for paying careful attention?

FURTHER STUDY

The Acts of the Apostles, pp. 581-584.

**Part 2
LINES OF
COMMUNICATION**

What was the chain of communication through which the truth of revelation came to man?

"The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John" (Rev. 1:1).

We cannot always understand how God works, so that the poet says, "God moves in a mysterious way His wonders to perform."—William Cowper. But we may be sure that God's ways are best. He chooses to make His revelations through Jesus Christ to an angel, who transmits it to John, and then John writes it for the churches. Thus we have a line of communication that is best suited to accomplish God's purposes.

In this hierarchy of descent we see an orderliness that is characteristic of God. He is not only authoritative in Himself, but His methods are right and proper. If we should listen when God speaks, we ought to enter into His plans when He communicates them to us.

In what way do the angels now inhabiting heaven show and express their loyalty to their leader? Rev. 7:11, 12.

In human communication a message may be garbled as it passes from mouth to mouth. But with the angels this possibility does not exist; the angels are too conscious of the glory of God to do anything other than the exact bidding of their Lord. Apparently they are aware of, and enter into, the plans and purposes of God, so that they cannot help but worship Him and ascribe to Him the qualities of majesty they can see.

If men were also a part of God's line of communication they, too, would be faithful in their responsibilities and glorifying in their responses. This is the ideal toward which we should strive.

What significant message or warning is given by the first angel of Revelation 14? (See verse 6.)

The reference to the "hour of his judgment" indicates the time and importance of the message.

THINK IT THROUGH

What responsibilities do I have as one who receives a message from God? How should I respond to the message?

FURTHER STUDY

Early Writings, pp. 230, 231.

**Part 3
WORSHIP OF
THE CREATOR**

What is the key thought in the first angel's message?

"Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters" (Rev. 14:7).

There is a worldwide need for such a message. Here are some of the conditions that may exist:

(1) People no longer fear and reverence God. Their minds are set on other things. Can you give some examples?

(2) People may recognize God, but they do not give Him the glory for all the benefits they enjoy. Can you give examples of how men credit science or their own achievements for blessings of life that come from the hand of God?

(3) They do not accept God as the Creator, the origin and source of all being. How does the theory of evolution undermine the concept of God as Creator?

"The message itself sheds light as to the time when this movement is to take place. It is declared to be a part of the 'everlasting gospel,' and it announces the opening of the judgment. The message of salvation has been preached in all ages; but this message is a part of the gospel which could be proclaimed only in the last days, for only then would it be true that the hour of judgment *had come*."—*The Great Controversy*, pp. 355, 356.

"In the beginning, God was revealed in all the works of creation. It was Christ that spread the heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth. It was His hand that hung the world in space, and fashioned the flowers of the field. 'His strength setteth fast the mountains.' 'The sea is His, and He made it.' Ps. 65:6; 95:5. It was He that filled the earth with beauty, and the air with song. And upon all things in earth, and air, and sky, He wrote the message of the Father's love."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 20.

What is the relationship of the fourth commandment to the message of the first angel? Ex. 20:8-11.

In the 1830s and 1840s when this message was first proclaimed, evolution was not an issue. Almost everyone believed that God was Creator. Charles Darwin's book, *Origin of the Species*, was published in 1859. The call to worship the Creator is very relevant for our day when a majority of people believe in the theory of evolution.

THINK IT THROUGH

Why is the concept of Creation more acceptable than the theory of evolution?

FURTHER STUDY

The Great Controversy, pp. 436-438.

Part 4
THE FALL OF
BABYLON

What message did the second angel give?

"And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication" (Rev. 14:8).

"The term 'Babylon' is derived from 'Babel,' and signifies confusion."—*The Great Controversy*, p. 381.

Only in the Bible, rightly interpreted and understood, do we have a logical ground of knowledge. We know of the origin of evil and the controversy that is going on between good and evil, Christ and Satan. As soon as we turn to another source of information, we become confused and lost.

Babylon represents all those organizations which oppose God's plans and purposes. Often in the past God's purposes seem to have been thwarted. The entrance of sin, the increase of sin in the days of Noah, the apostasy of God's people culminating in the rejection of Christ. Even in the last days there will be movements and organizations which will seek to defeat God's plan for man's salvation. But God's warning message is that Babylon is fallen. It is important for all people everywhere to link up with God's everlasting gospel, and to shun any association that will mean their utter destruction when truth finally gains the victory over evil.

"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."—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 474.

THINK IT THROUGH

How does one combat error in philosophy or religion?

FURTHER STUDY

Early Writings, pp. 237-240.

**Part 5
BEAST, IMAGE,
AND MARK**

What happens to those who receive the mark of the beast in hand or forehead?

"And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation" (Rev. 14:9, 10).

The beast is mentioned in Revelation 13:1 and is described as having "the name of blasphemy" on its seven heads. This immediately characterizes it as taking God's place. The image is mentioned in Revelation 13:14 and is described as demanding worship (verse 15), which places it in the same category as anti-God. The mark is obviously a sign given to an adherent so that he may be distinguished from those who do not have the mark. God's warning message is that any or all who engage in activity that is opposed to God will suffer dire consequences, described as drinking the wine of God's wrath.

By contrast to the "mark of the beast," what is the observance of the seventh-day Sabbath called? Ex. 31:13, 16, 17.

"Thus the distinction is drawn between the loyal and the disloyal. Those who desire to have the seal of God in their foreheads must keep the Sabbath of the fourth commandment. Thus they are distinguished from the disloyal, who have accepted a man-made institution in place of the true Sabbath."—Ellen G. White Comments, *S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 981.

"To give glory to God is to reveal His character in our own, and thus make Him known. And in whatever way we make known the Father or the Son, we glorify God."—Ellen G. White Comments, *S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 979.

THINK IT THROUGH

Why is the keeping of the Sabbath so important in these last days? When and how does one receive the mark of the beast?

"The substitution of the false for the true is the last act in the drama. When this substitution becomes universal, God will reveal Himself. When the laws of men are exalted above the laws of God, when the powers of this earth try to force men to keep the first day of the week, know that the time has come for God to work."—Ellen G. White Comments, *S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 980.

FURTHER STUDY

The Great Controversy, pp. 449, 450.

**Part 6
THE SECRET
OF VICTORY**

What will be the outcome for those who, in the face of persecution, worship God on the day that commemorates His creative work?

"I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God. And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest" (Rev. 15: 2-4).

It is not easy to keep the Sabbath in certain situations. Often it involves persecution, loss of property, and being despised by peers and fellow citizens. But some will not be kept from doing right whatever the consequences, and one day they will find themselves honored for their stand.

The song of Moses and the song of the Lamb are songs of deliverance. Moses brought deliverance from the bondage of Egypt. The Lamb (our Lord) brings escape from the bondage of sin. Sometimes it looks as though evil will overcome the good, but God's works are "great and marvellous," His ways are "just and true." Those who are dedicated to God for accomplishing His will soon find that God's truth always triumphs and they triumph with it. The universe will come to acknowledge the goodness of God.

**What is the relationship to God of those who overcome?
Rev. 21:7.**

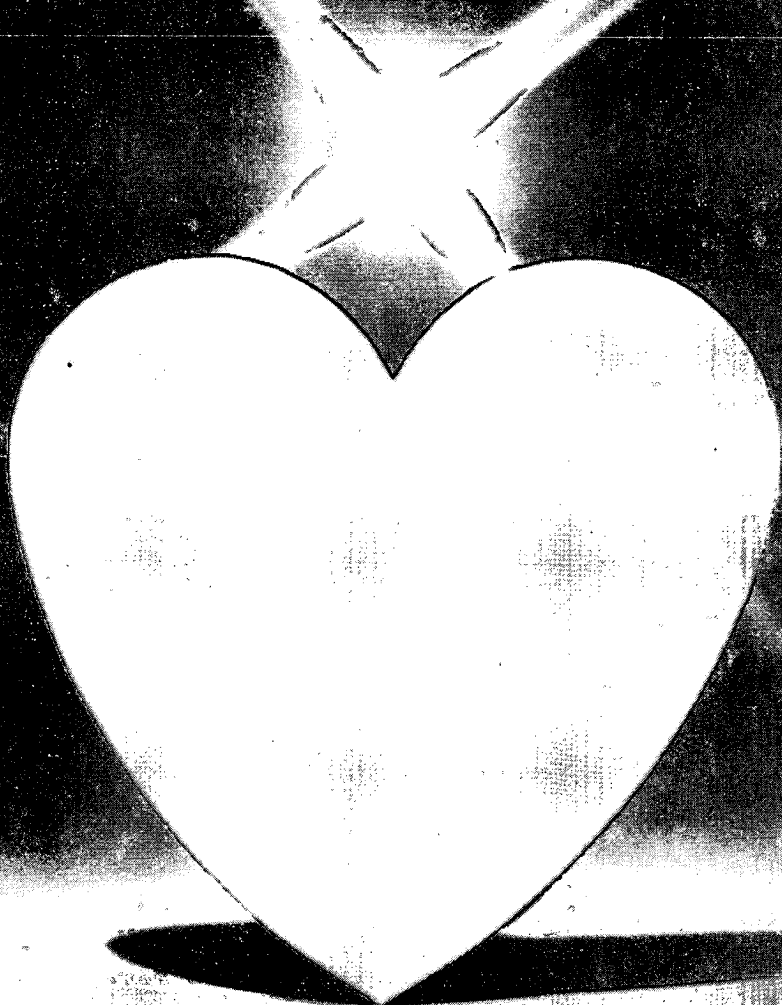
The redeemed will worship God throughout eternity. They will be forever grateful because they have been snatched as brands from the burning. They recognize God's unlimited generosity because they are being treated as sons, with love and respect. What more could they ask for? Furthermore, they have inherited "all things." There is a close tie of common interest. They are members of a family where there is peace and harmony. They work together and eat together and associate together in an environment that is unbelievably beautiful. After years of struggle and strife, they are now in a permanent home where there will be no more the sorrow of parting.

THINK IT THROUGH

Why is it good sometimes to dwell on the rewards of the righteous?

FURTHER STUDY

The Great Controversy, pp. 650-652.



Creator and Life-giver

“Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father” (John 10:17, 18).

Man cannot define what life is. He can see the difference between a living and a dead organism. He knows what happens to a loved one when life departs, but he does not really know what life is except as he studies God's Word and reads that life is the breath of God. (See. Gen. 2:7.)

How Jesus was able to lay down His life and take it up again, as He claimed, is a mystery we cannot understand. It must be related to His divinity and is

one evidence that Jesus qualifies for worship as God. We also do not understand why there needed to be an unnatural darkness and an earthquake at the time of the crucifixion (Matt. 27:45, 51). One thing seems certain, that the powers of the earth are affected by God's presence and all nature is subject to His will and direction.

When an individual goes to sleep, we expect him to awaken again. Such a state of unconsciousness is normal and does not give us concern. When a Christian dies in the Lord, he also will awaken again. In this sense Jesus referred to the death of His believers as sleep. We who believe also should not allow death to cause us great concern, for it is but a temporary state of unconsciousness. Jesus was “asleep” over the weekend, but He arose Sunday morning. Because of this great event we too have the hope and the comfort of knowing that our death will be only a temporary sleep and that we shall arise in the glorious dawn of a new morning.

DAILY HIGHLIGHTS

1. **The Source of Life**
(John 11:43, 44)
2. **God's Plan Unfolded**
(1 Peter 1:20)
3. **The Response of Nature**
(Matt. 27:45)
4. **Dying and Rising Again**
(John 12:24)
5. **The Power to Renew Life**
(John 10:17, 18)
6. **Our Only Hope**
(1 Cor. 15:17-19)

**Part 1
THE SOURCE
OF LIFE**

What great miracle illustrated Jesus' ability to give life?

"When he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth. And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go" (John 11:43, 44).

Popular journals sometimes carry stories that purport to sustain a belief that the dead are now alive. But the Bible teaches that the dead will live again only by the resurrection. All claims that the dead are now living are deceptions.

How did the scribes and Pharisees admit that Jesus had performed many miracles? John 11:47.

Probably no other miracle Jesus performed was so spectacular as this one. There was no way to deny that Jesus had indeed raised Lazarus from the dead; even the scribes and Pharisees admitted it. This miracle demonstrated that Jesus had the power that he claimed to be the resurrection and the life (John 11:25).

How did Caiaphas unwittingly acknowledge Jesus' saving power? John 11:50-53.

"In declaring that one man should die for the nation, Caiaphas indicated that he had some knowledge of the prophecies, although it was very limited. But John, in his account of this scene, takes up the prophecy, and shows its broad and deep significance. He says, 'And not for that nation only, but that also He should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad.' How blindly did the haughty Caiaphas acknowledge the Saviour's mission!"—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 540.

THINK IT THROUGH

What is the significance to you and me that Jesus was able to raise Lazarus from the dead? In rejecting Jesus as the Messiah, what were the scribes and Pharisees actually rejecting?

"We may refuse the invitations that Christ sends to us; we may neglect His offer of pardon and peace; but still it remains a fact that every one of us has been bought with a price, even with the precious blood of the Son of God. Therefore, 'Consider him' (Heb. 12:3)."—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 100.

FURTHER STUDY

The Desire of Ages, pp. 530, 536.

Part 2
GOD'S PLAN
UNFOLDED

How does Peter reveal that provision was made for the salvation of man (in case he fell) even before the foundation of the world?

"He was destined before the foundation of the world but was made manifest at the end of the times for your sake" (1 Peter 1:20, RSV).

God is not caught unawares. He foresaw sin.

"The plan of salvation had its place in the counsels of the Infinite from all eternity. The gospel is the revelation of God's love to men, and means everything that is essential to the happiness and well-being of humanity. The work of God in the earth is of immeasurable importance, and it is Satan's special object to crowd it out of sight and mind, that he may make his specious devices effectual in the destruction of those for whom Christ died. It is his purpose to cause the discoveries of men to be exalted above the wisdom of God."—*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 186.

When was God's plan first made known to man? Gen. 3:15.

"The central theme of the Bible, the theme about which every other in the whole book clusters, is the redemption plan, the restoration in the human soul of the image of God. From the first intimation of hope in the sentence pronounced in Eden to that last glorious promise of the Revelation, 'They shall see His face; and His name shall be in their foreheads' (Revelation 22:4), the burden of every book and every passage of the Bible is the unfolding of this wondrous theme,—man's uplifting,—the power of God. . . .

"He who grasps this thought has before him an infinite field for study. He has the key that will unlock to him the whole treasure house of God's word.

"The science of redemption is the science of all sciences; . . . the science that enters into the purpose brooded in the mind of the Infinite—'kept in silence through times eternal' (Romans 16:25, R.V.); the science that will be the study of God's redeemed throughout endless ages."—*Education*, pp. 125, 126.

Why only could Jesus rather than an angel meet the death penalty of sin? John 5:26.

THINK IT THROUGH

Is it easier for me to look back to the empty tomb and believe than for the patriarchs to look forward by faith?

FURTHER STUDY

Patriarchs and Prophets, pp. 63, 64.

Part 3
THE RESPONSE
OF NATURE

What phenomenon of nature expressed the anguish of Jesus on the cross?

“Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour” (Matt. 27:45).

“The darkness upon the face of nature expressed her sympathy with Christ in His expiring agony. . . . It was a miraculous testimony given of God, that the faith of after generations might be confirmed. . . .

“ . . . Nature could not witness such a scene as Christ dying in agony while bearing the penalty of man’s transgression. God and the angels clothed themselves with darkness, and hid the Saviour from the gaze of the curious multitude while He drank the last dregs of the cup of God’s wrath.”—Ellen G. White Comments, *S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 1108.

What other phenomenon typified the tremendous event taking place with the death of Jesus? Matt. 27:51.

The shaking of the earth, the splitting of the rocks, must have convinced every onlooker that the person on the cross was no ordinary man; His death was no ordinary event. The Roman centurion recognized it (Luke 23:47). Is it not surprising that God’s own people should be deaf to the voice of nature at this time? All they could be concerned about was their personal safety.

“ ‘Truly this was the Son of God.’ Many who had scoffed and jeered at, and taunted the Son of God were terribly afraid that the shaking earth, the rent and trembling rocks would put an end to their own lives. They hastened away from the scene, beating upon their breasts, stumbling, falling, in awful terror lest the earth should open and swallow them up.”—Ellen G. White Comments, *S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 1108.

During what event that occurred two days later did the earth quake again? Matt. 28:2.

THINK IT THROUGH

How does God use events in nature to speak to His people? What physical signs can warn us of the second advent?

“The signs of the times are ominous. Coming events cast their shadows before. The Spirit of God is withdrawing from the earth, and calamity follows calamity by sea and by land. There are tempests, earthquakes, fires, floods, murders of every grade. Who can read the future? Where is security?”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 636.

FURTHER STUDY

The Desire of Ages, pp. 756, 757.

**Part 4
DYING AND
RISING AGAIN**

What principle of nature did Jesus point out to His disciples?

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit" (John 12:24).

What did Jesus predict would happen after He was slain? Luke 9:22.

Jesus told the disciples what was going to happen to Him. They no doubt listened politely, but they did not really understand because they were obsessed with hopes for personal gain in a temporal kingdom. Can it be that we today are so concerned with material goods that we also do not understand what Jesus is saying to us even though we pretend to listen?

"Before His crucifixion the Saviour explained to His disciples that He was to be put to death and to rise again from the tomb, and angels were present to impress His words on minds and hearts. But the disciples were looking for temporal deliverance from the Roman yoke, and they could not tolerate the thought that He in whom all their hopes centered should suffer an ignominious death."—*The Great Controversy*, p. 594.

Death need not be the end of all things. The seed that is placed in the ground ends its life as a seed, but it develops a root and a stem that is to produce a plant after the order of the seed itself, and this plant will produce many more seeds, some of which will be used as food, and some will be used as seed for the next harvest.

How does Paul describe the change that takes place at the resurrection by means of the illustration of the seed? 1 Cor. 15:36-38.

THINK IT THROUGH

When can death be a tragedy, and when can it be the gateway to an even greater life? Why is the resurrection so important for us? 1 Thess. 4:14.

"In the prophecies the future is opened before us as plainly as it was opened to the disciples by the words of Christ. The events connected with the close of probation and the work of preparation for the time of trouble, are clearly presented. But multitudes have no more understanding of these important truths than if they had never been revealed. Satan watches to catch away every impression that would make them wise unto salvation, and the time of trouble will find them unready."—*The Great Controversy*, p. 594.

FURTHER STUDY

Early Writings, pp. 181, 182.

Part 5
POWER TO
RENEW LIFE

How did Jesus say He would rise from the dead?

"Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father" (John 10:17, 18).

Jesus makes it clear that He laid down His life of His own volition; no one seized it from Him. Judas betrayed Him; the Jewish leaders rejected Him; the Roman soldiers crucified Him. But in the strictest sense they did not take His life; He gave it up. He died of a broken heart. This aspect of Jesus is important to note because it points up where the power is. God is not subject to the whims and fancies of this creation. He is the Sovereign Ruler, and everything is in His control.

Why is the resurrection of Jesus so important to the Christian? 1 Cor. 15:12-19.

The resurrection of Jesus means that the resurrection of the saints is a certainty. It means that death is no longer a tragedy to those who die in the Lord, but it may even be a blessing. (See Rev. 14:13.) It means that those who mourn need not do so as those who have no hope; they know that death is sleep and the morning comes when loved ones will come to life and live happily evermore. It also means that the concept that a person goes to heaven or hell when he dies is wholly unscriptural.

THINK IT THROUGH

What does the power of the resurrection tell us about the nature of Jesus? What is His plan for humanity?

"All created beings live by the will and power of God. They are recipients of the life of the Son of God. However able and talented, however large their capacities, they are replenished with life from the Source of all life. He is the spring, the fountain, of life. Only He who alone hath immortality, dwelling in light and life, should say, 'I have power to lay it [my life] down, and I have power to take it again' (John 10:18). . . .

"Christ was invested with the right to give immortality. The life which He had laid down in humanity, He again took up and gave to humanity."—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, pp. 301, 302.

FURTHER STUDY

Selected Messages, bk. 1, pp. 301-303.

**Part 6
OUR ONLY
HOPE**

What would be our prospects if Christ had not risen?

"If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. . . . If in this life only we have hope in Christ we are of all men most miserable" (1 Cor. 15:17-19).

The expression, "ye are yet in your sins" points out the hopelessness of man if Christ is not raised; it is not merely a dark future that he faces, but a dismal present. Man in the bondage of sin longs for release, a release that can be his only when the Creator becomes also his Redeemer.

"The resurrection of Jesus was a type of the final resurrection of all who sleep in Him. The countenance of the risen Saviour, His manner, His speech, were all familiar to His disciples. As Jesus arose from the dead, so those who sleep in Him are to rise again. We shall know our friends, even as the disciples knew Jesus. They may have been deformed, diseased, or disfigured, in this mortal life, and they rise in perfect health and symmetry; yet in the glorified body their identity will be perfectly preserved. Then shall we know even as also we are known. 1 Cor. 13:12. In the face radiant with the light shining from the face of Jesus, we shall recognize the lineaments of those we love."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 804.

When Christ came forth victorious over death, what unusual occurrence portended a great future event? Matt. 27: 52, 53.

It is interesting to note that inanimate creation responds in kind to the mighty events taking place in the realm of the spiritual. Jesus triumphs over the grave, and all nature shakes with the tremendous implications of that stupendous event.

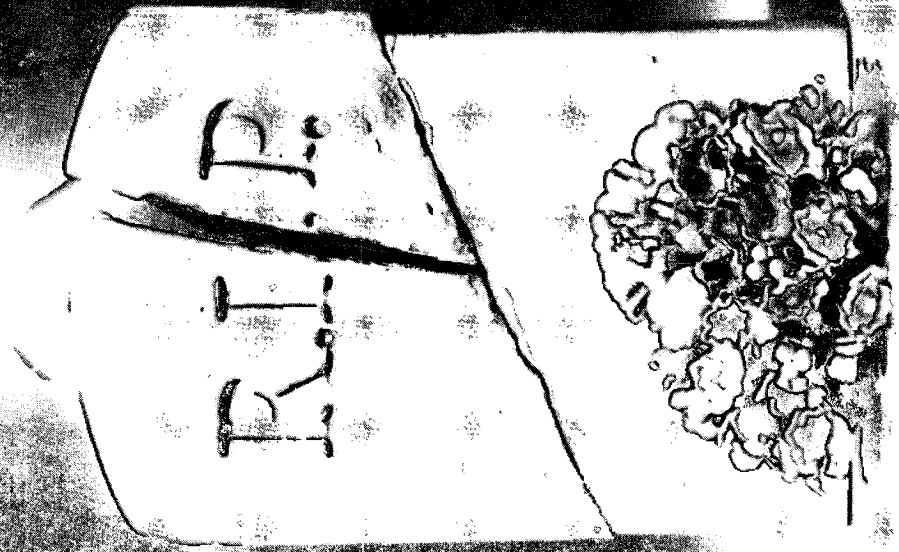
Fear must have gripped the hearts of men and women as they felt the earth shake and saw men and women come out of their tombs. Yet how few related these physical manifestations to the power of God that was working out man's salvation.

THINK IT THROUGH

If I should die before Jesus comes, what would make possible my arising in the first resurrection?

FURTHER STUDY

The Acts of the Apostles, pp. 319-321.



The Creator and the Resurrection

“When this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: Death is swallowed up in victory” (1 Cor. 15:54).

When God created man out of the dust of the ground, He created him perfect. Once again in the future God will make man perfect, calling him out of the dust of the tomb. The resurrection of the righteous will be an act of creation, an act as grand as the creation of Adam and Eve. From the dust of the ground over all the earth, and from the seas also, God’s children will be re-created. The righteous living at the time of Christ’s second coming will have the glorious opportunity of

seeing this second demonstration of God’s creative power.

The resurrection of the wicked at the end of the thousand years will also be a mighty demonstration of the life-giving ability of the Creator. However, there is one great difference between the resurrection of the just and the resurrection of the wicked. The thoughts of the wicked will be the same wicked thoughts in the moment of rising as when they went down into their graves, thoughts of blasphemy and sin. Their bodies remain scarred and deformed, an evidence of the sinful lives that have been lived.

DAILY HIGHLIGHTS

1. **The Mystery of Resurrection**
(1 Cor. 15:51, 52)
2. **The Dead Come to Life**
(John 5:28, 29)
3. **Translation of the Living**
(1 Thess. 4:17)
4. **From Corruption to Incorruption**
(1 Cor. 15:53)
5. **From Mortality to Immortality**
(1 Cor. 15:54)
6. **Victory Over Death**
(1 Cor. 15:54-57)

Part 1
THE MYSTERY OF
RESURRECTION

What mystery did the apostle Paul say he would show to the Corinthians?

"Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed" (1 Cor. 15:51, 52).

The word "mystery" as used here by Paul is not something hidden which cannot be known. It is a divine secret which is revealed to the believer. Paul had revealed to him a matter which was not known by the general public, but which was now to be revealed, namely, the raising of people from the dead.

We do not know how God will accomplish the physical changes necessary to bring the living righteous to perfection when He comes, even as we do not know how He created Adam or how He will raise to life again those long dead. But the sureness of the promise and the reality of the change are not dependent upon our understanding of the process.

"His [God's] creative power is as incomprehensible as His existence."—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 113.

How is the great mysterious process of creation described in Psalms? Ps. 104:24, 30.

"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 further, and doubt the existence of God; and then, having lost their anchor, they are left to beat about upon the rocks of infidelity."—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 113.

THINK IT THROUGH

Describe the changes that will take place at the resurrection and show how they are physical and spiritual.

"When the voice of God awakes the dead, he will come from the grave with the same appetites and passions, the same likes and dislikes, that he cherished when living. God works no miracle to re-create a man who would not be re-created when he was granted every opportunity and provided with every facility. During his lifetime he took no delight in God, nor found pleasure in His service. His character is not in harmony with God, and he could not be happy in the heavenly family."—*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 270.

FURTHER STUDY

Testimonies, vol. 5, pp. 698-700.

Part 2
THE DEAD
COME TO LIFE

What great demonstration of God's creative power is yet to occur?

"Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation" (John 5:28, 29).

What additional unique power will God use on righteous dead that He will not do for the wicked dead? 1 Cor. 15:49.

A new type of body is needed for the new conditions under which the redeemed shall live. Identity is not lost, but the substance of the body will be changed.

"Our personal identity is preserved in the resurrection, though not the same particles of matter or material substance as went into the grave. The wondrous works of God are a mystery to man. The spirit, the character of man, is returned to God, there to be preserved. In the resurrection every man will have his own character. God in His own time will call forth the dead, giving again the breath of life, and bidding the dry bones live. The same form will come forth, but it will be free from disease and every defect. It lives again bearing the same individuality of features, so that friend will recognize friend. There is no law of God in nature which shows that God gives back the same identical particles of matter which composed the body before death. God shall give the righteous dead a body that will please Him."—Ellen G. White Comments, *S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, p. 1093.

Through His power, God will bring to life each dead saint. The product will be perfect but still readily recognizable by relatives and friends. The brain will be purified from all impure thoughts and memories and the beauty of holy thoughts will be present and active.

THINK IT THROUGH

Show how the changes in the material substance of the body do not affect a person's identity.

Even in this present life the body undergoes continual change. Yet the "I" is the same. This may be a mystery of life, but it helps us to understand that the changes necessary in the resurrection do not affect one's identity.

The first thought of the resurrected person is one of victory. He recognizes that he was dead but is alive again. The sting and pain of death are gone forever.

FURTHER STUDY

The Great Controversy, pp. 644, 645.

**Part 3
TRANSLATION
OF THE LIVING**

What great experience awaits the righteous living when Jesus comes the second time?

"Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (1 Thess. 4:17).

Not everyone will taste of death before the second advent. Some will be alive to witness the coming of Jesus, and they will have the experience of translation rather than resurrection.

"It was as a representative of those who shall be thus translated that Elijah, near the close of Christ's earthly ministry, was permitted to stand with Moses by the side of the Saviour on the mount of transfiguration [Matt. 17:1-8]. In these glorified ones, the disciples saw in miniature a representation of the kingdom of the redeemed. They beheld Jesus clothed with the light of heaven. . . ; and there also stood Elijah, representing those who at the close of earth's history will be changed from mortal to immortal and be translated to heaven without seeing death."—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 227.

The change that takes place at translation cannot be understood any easier than the miracle of raising a person from the dead. Earthly beings adapted to life in this world will be enabled to transfer to another world, remain for 1000 years, and return. God uses His creative power to make this possible.

What miracle of healing in the past can give us an insight into the marvel of translation? Matt. 9:2-8.

"It required nothing less than creative power to restore health to that decaying body. The same voice that spoke life to man created from the dust of the earth had spoken life to the dying paralytic. And the same power that gave life to the body had renewed the heart. He who at the creation 'spoke, and it was,' who 'commanded, and it stood fast' (Ps. 33:9), had spoken life to the soul dead in trespasses and sins. The healing of the body was an evidence of the power that had renewed the heart. Christ bade the paralytic arise and walk, 'that ye may know,' He said, 'that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins.'"
—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 269, 270.

THINK IT THROUGH

Show how we do not have to wait for translation before we experience a transformation of life.

FURTHER STUDY

The Desire of Ages, pp. 268-271.

Part 4
FROM CORRUPTION
TO INCORRUPTION

What complete transformation takes place at the resurrection?

“For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality” (1 Cor. 15:53).

The perishable must become imperishable. But in the process there is no change in identity. This thought is expressed by the verb “put on,” which is closely linked with the idea of clothing. The individual accepts a change which is to his advantage, but he has not ceased to exist in the process. On the contrary, he has become more fitted for the new estate.

It is very difficult to realize in detail the changes that take place when mortal puts on immortality. We are so used to the process of dying, which begins even the moment we are born, that we cannot visualize what is going to happen. But we are so anxious for the change to take place that we are willing to ignore the process and snatch at the result.

What will be the end product of the change? Phil. 3:21.

“Our vile body” is contrasted with the “glorious body” of Jesus Christ. “Vile” is rather a harsh term to use in this connection (compare RSV, “lowly body”). The meaning is that our bodies now are subject to the frailties of human flesh, such as a proclivity to sin, to disease, to painful experiences, and to a depressing sense of limitation. All this is exchanged for a “glorious body,” one that gives joy and pride, that lives up to all the expectations of the Spirit.

THINK IT THROUGH

What will it mean to me to have a body like Jesus has?

“Restored to the tree of life in the long-lost Eden, the redeemed will ‘grow up’ (Malachi 4:2) to the full stature of the race in its primeval glory. The last lingering traces of the curse of sin will be removed, and Christ’s faithful ones will appear ‘in the beauty of the Lord our God,’ in mind and soul and body reflecting the perfect image of their Lord.”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 645.

FURTHER STUDY

The Great Controversy, pp. 644-647.

**Part 5
FROM MORTALITY
TO IMMORTALITY**

In addition to the change discussed in part 4, what further change will occur to the bodies of the saints at Christ's coming?

"So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory" (1 Cor. 15:54).

God never intended that anything should die. It is sin that brought death. God is the author of life and it is His purpose that everything shall reflect His glory throughout eternity. God's avowed purpose, ever since sin entered into the universe, is that sin shall be known for the destructive force that it is, and then be forever rejected. The resurrection is the time when God begins to make all things new.

" 'I am the resurrection, and the life.' [John 11:25]. This language can be used only by the Deity. All created things live by the will and power of God. They are dependent recipients of the life of the Son of God. . . . All the human beings in our world take their life from Him. He is the spring, the fountain of life."—Ellen G. White Comments, *S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 1113.

**What did Christ abolish that made immortality possible?
2 Tim. 1:10.**

By wiping out the sin of which man was guilty, Christ abolished the death to which man was subject because of sin. In this way man is enabled to enjoy eternal life that can know no death.

"No one less holy than the Only Begotten of the Father, could have offered a sacrifice that would be efficacious to cleanse all—even the most sinful and degraded—who accept the Saviour as their atonement and become obedient to Heaven's law. Nothing less could have reinstated man in God's favor."—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 309.

What event in Christ's life assures resurrection to immortal life? 1 Cor. 15:16, 18, 20.

THINK IT THROUGH

Note these four possibilities. What are the advantages and disadvantages of each?

- (1) An imperfect body and mortality.
- (2) Eternal life with an imperfect body.
- (3) A perfect body with mortality.
- (4) Eternal life with a perfect body.

FURTHER STUDY

Selected Messages, bk. 1, pp. 296-300.

**Part 6
VICTORY
OVER DEATH**

What will be the greatest of all victories?

"Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? . . . But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. 15:54-57).

Death is personified here as an enemy that will finally be defeated. Sin is the sting which causes human death. The victory that overcame sin did away with death.

There are two kinds of death, one is irrevocable and eternal; the other is temporary and is frequently referred to in the Bible as sleep. Most of the redeemed will have experienced the latter type of death; but praise God, this is not a final death; it is only a short cessation of life until victory over death has been completely achieved.

What has made it possible for us to partake of glorious victory? John 11:25.

Although Christ is the resurrection and the life, this fact alone is not sufficient to ensure that you and I can live. You and I must appropriate that life to ourselves by believing in Him who can raise us from the dead.

"Many are unwilling to accept of Christ until the whole mystery of the plan of salvation shall be made plain to them. They refuse the look of faith, although they see that thousands have looked, and have felt the efficacy of looking, to the cross of Christ. Many wander in the mazes of philosophy, in search of reasons and evidence which they will never find, while they reject the evidence which God has been pleased to give. . . . If those who were bitten by the serpents had stopped to doubt and question before they would consent to look, they would have perished. It is our duty, first, to look; and the look of faith will give us life."—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 432.

THINK IT THROUGH

How can I show my belief in the resurrection and hope of eternal life?

"If any man's work abide, . . . he shall receive a reward.' Glorious will be the reward bestowed when the faithful workers are gathered about the throne of God and the Lamb. When John in his mortal state beheld the glory of God, he fell as one dead; he was not able to endure the sight. But when mortal shall have put on immortality, the ransomed ones are like Jesus, for they see Him as He is. They stand before the throne, signifying that they are accepted. All their sins are blotted out, all their transgressions borne away. Now they can look upon the undimmed glory from the throne of God."—*Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 467.

FURTHER STUDY

Early Writings, pp. 286-288.

BOOK
OF
LIFE

The Creator and the Restoration

“And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea” (Rev. 21:1).

Restoration is not necessary unless something has deteriorated. What needs to be restored in people? When Lucifer seduced man into sin, he caused him to lose face-to-face communication with God. Man lost his garden home, he lost everlasting life, and he lost physical perfection of body. Most of all, the spiritual likeness to the Creator was lost. All these will be restored again by God. Man will again be able to communicate directly with his Creator. He will enjoy the magnificent beauty of Eden which was

his home originally. Everlasting life will be available as he partakes of the fruit of the tree of life. Physical perfection will be his again—no sickness, no pain, no suffering. And of course he will again reflect spiritually his Maker.

But the restoration goes beyond merely attaining that which was lost originally. The experience of sin, the vindication of God's character after a struggle of many thousands of years, the presence of Jesus with His nail-pierced hands—all are aspects of history that will never be erased; they ensure that sin can never raise its ugly head again. In a sense, the restoration raises man to a higher level than he ever attained before. The entrance of sin was a tragedy. But through God's re-creative power new understandings of His character have been brought to light. How great is our Creator! We shall never be able to comprehend fully, or exhaust our understanding of the way He can turn failure to success, tragedy to triumph, death to eternal life.

DAILY HIGHLIGHTS

1. **Sojourn in Heaven**
(Isa. 64:4)
2. **The First and Second Deaths**
(Rev. 20:6)
3. **The Earth Purified**
(Rev. 20:9, 11)
4. **A New Creation**
(Rev. 21:1)
5. **Jesus With His People**
(Rev. 21:2, 3)
6. **Eternal Perfection**
(Rev. 21:4, 5)

**Part 1
SOJOURN
IN HEAVEN**

How does Isaiah describe the wonders of heaven?

"Since the beginning of the world men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside thee, what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him" (Isa. 64:4).

It is impossible for man fully to comprehend what God has in store for him. However far he stretches his imagination, he will always be tied to what he has seen. Since God is limitless, He can produce a world of wonders that far exceed man's capacity for visualization, and this is what we are assured will be the case when God effects a restoration.

"The nearest we can come to a description of the reward that awaits the overcomer is to say that it is a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. It will be an eternity of bliss, a blessed eternity, unfolding new glories throughout the ceaseless ages."—*Testimonies*, vol. 8, p. 131.

What will the saints be doing in heaven, and how long will it take? Rev. 20:4.

At the second coming the wicked will be destroyed when the righteous are raised. The earth will remain a scene of desolation until the end of the thousand years.

Meanwhile the saints are in heaven and they have access to the records which have determined who is worthy to be in the kingdom and who is not. If there should be any question in anyone's mind regarding the justice of the treatment meted out to each person, the records are there for confirmation. In this fair way God vindicates His judgments, and everyone will recognize the justice and mercy of God.

THINK IT THROUGH

Why do you think there will be no such thing as boredom in the new earth? What interests can you develop here that you can continue then?

In the new earth the redeemed will build houses and inhabit them, plant trees and enjoy their fruit. Since there is no limit to the good that can be done and no end to the variety of occupations that can be indulged in, there can be no time when a person will say, I am tired and bored.

How often in our experience, legitimate desires and ambitions have been stifled because of lack of time? How many projects and interests have we put aside because there was no time or opportunity? In the heavenly land, with eternity spread out before us, this will never again be a problem. For as long as interest lasts, we may pursue our activities; and as long as desire persists, there will be opportunities to fulfill them.

FURTHER STUDY

Testimonies, vol. 8, pp. 130-132.

Part 2
THE FIRST AND
SECOND DEATHS

What makes the first resurrection so important?

"Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years" (Rev. 20:6).

Those who rise in the first resurrection will have passed from death to life. That is what makes the experience so important. Now they can do the work of praising God and attributing to Him all glory and power and the victory over sin. No one will need to tell the other of the goodness of God, but everyone will be anxious to testify to God's loving care and goodness. Rather than being a consuming fire to them, God is a sun and shield. He is now seen to be a Creator and re-Creator.

What is the meaning of the expression, "second death"?

The first death is the death that has passed on all men because all have sinned (Rom. 3:23). The second death is the final annihilation of the wicked that takes place at the end of the thousand years. After the first death there is hope of a resurrection. But after the second death there is no hope of life. Dean Henry Alford comments, "As there is a second and higher life, so there is a second and deeper death. And as after that there is no more death, so after that death there is no more life."

Because the saints are delivered from the second death, what past song of deliverance will they sing? Rev. 15:3.

The wicked who are raised after the first death are given only a temporary restoration of life. The righteous who die in the first death have only a temporary sleep. The wicked who are raised temporarily continue their downward march toward eternal death. The righteous continue to live in the presence of God. The wicked are annihilated and cease to exist forever. The righteous are glorified and have eternal life in God.

THINK IT THROUGH

Why is the second death just and merciful at the same time?

"As the priest, in removing the sins from the sanctuary, confessed them upon the head of the scapegoat, so Christ will place all these sins upon Satan, the originator and instigator of sin. . . . Thus the great plan of redemption will reach its accomplishment in the final eradication of sin and the deliverance of all who have been willing to renounce evil."—*The Great Controversy*, pp. 485, 486.

FURTHER STUDY

Early Writings, pp. 294, 295.

Part 3
THE EARTH
PURIFIED

Where will the wicked receive the final execution of judgment?

“They went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them.”

“And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them” (Rev. 20:9, 11).

What event of the past is a type of this future event? Gen. 7:23; 2 Peter 3:5-7.

Fire with its heat is a purifying agent. Through strong heat iron can be cleared of its impurities. Boiling water destroys the living matter within it. Thus the very elementary processes of nature illustrate what God needs to do to purge the earth of all its imperfections and sin. The way is now prepared for a new earth where the former things are forgotten, and all things reflect the perfection of their Creator.

“When the flood of waters was at its height upon the earth, it had the appearance of a boundless lake of water. When God finally purifies the earth, it will appear like a boundless lake of fire. As God preserved the ark amid the commotions of the Flood, because it contained eight righteous persons, He will preserve the New Jerusalem, containing the faithful of all ages, from righteous Abel down to the last saint which lived. Although the whole earth, with the exception of that portion where the city rests, will be wrapped in a sea of liquid fire, yet the city is preserved as was the ark, by a miracle of Almighty power. It stands unharmed amid the devouring elements.”—Ellen G. White Comments, *S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 986.

What expression used in Genesis 1:2 is also used to describe the earth during the 1000 years before it is purified? Gen. 1:2; Jer. 4:23-26.

God is a God of order. When He began His creative acts as recorded in Genesis He established form and order, system and beauty, in that which was essentially chaotic. At the end of the thousand years God will restore law and order, beauty and usefulness, to that which has been marred and scarred by sin. In the Edenic state and the condition of the earth during the thousand years we see a contrast between what God desires and what sin has succeeded in achieving.

THINK IT THROUGH

As the saints in the Holy City witness the fires of purification operate all around them, how do you think they feel?

FURTHER STUDY

The Great Controversy, pp. 673, 674.

Part 4
A NEW CREATION

After God purifies the earth of all sin, what will He do?

"I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea" (Rev. 21:1).

"There was no more sea." This expression in the context of the first heaven and the first earth having passed away suggests that there will be none of the activities of the sea which made it a dreadful phenomenon. For instance, the sea separates people by many miles; it can dash a ship against the rocks or swallow the ship with all its passengers and crew without a survivor. It can be seen as an inexorable power as it pounds mercilessly along the shore. There will be no such frightening phenomenon in the earth made new. At the same time there is a sea of glass before the throne (Rev. 4:6). Whatever there is good about a sea will be there.

"John is probably emphasizing the fact that the new heavens and earth will be created from the purified elements of the old, and thus be new in quality, different. The new heavens and the new earth are, then, a re-creation, a forming anew of existing elements, and not a creation *ex nihilo*."—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 889.

Some of the events of Creation Week will be repeated again. The surface of the earth must be made into a suitable habitat for living things. Plants and animals will be created. What a grand opportunity the saints will have to witness Creation again!

How does Isaiah describe what happens when the new earth is created? Isa. 65:17.

THINK IT THROUGH

What are aspects of life that you look forward to in the new earth which will be different from what you experience now?

It will be a joy to be free from the shackles of sin, to see beauty and cooperation in every element of nature. There will be cooling springs of water, and luscious fruits to pluck from trees that produce abundantly. The tree of life will invigorate every part of the body. No more pain or weary striving; no frustrations or disappointments. Somehow the whole being is raised to praise the One who has provided such constant delight and ever growing experience.

FURTHER STUDY

Early Writings, pp. 17-20.

**Part 5
JESUS WITH
HIS PEOPLE**

Every nation has a capital, a seat of government and authority. What will be the capital of the earth made new?

"I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God" (Rev. 21:2, 3).

God has always wanted to be with His people. In the Garden of Eden there is a clear picture of communication between God and Adam and Eve. Sin brought about a separation of man from God, but God still sought to communicate with men, as He did with Cain when he sinned. In the wilderness of Sinai God asked for a tabernacle to be built so that He could be in the midst of His people. In the earth made new that objective of closeness between Creator and created will be realized.

How is the Holy City further described? Rev. 21:4, 10-27; 22:1-6.

The symbol of the bride is very striking. Note how an important feature of the bride is her dress (Rev. 19:8). Note that the symbol of marriage is to express the close and indissoluble union that is to exist between Christ and His people. Also the church is referred to as the bride of Christ. (See 2 Cor. 11:2.)

THINK IT THROUGH

Why is closeness to people so important to God?

The mutual relationship between God and His people shows the high regard God has for them, and the great condescension of God that He, the Creator and Source of all being, will associate on a personal level with His created beings. God is not so much possessive as communicative, which means that His presence brings incalculable blessings, and is the spring of eternal happiness.

"By His life and His death, Christ has achieved even more than recovery from the ruin wrought through sin. It was Satan's purpose to bring about an eternal separation between God and man; but in Christ we become more closely united to God than if we had never fallen. In taking our nature, the Saviour has bound Himself to humanity by a tie that is never to be broken. Through the eternal ages He is linked with us. 'God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son.' John 3:16. He gave Him not only to bear our sins, and to die as our sacrifice; He gave Him to the fallen race."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 25.

FURTHER STUDY

Education, pp. 301-305.

Part 6
ETERNAL
PERFECTION

What aspect of restoration makes the new earth state an embodiment of eternal perfection?

“God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful” (Rev. 21:4, 5).

It is noteworthy that before a perfect universe can be erected the old has to be taken away. Any work of reform will involve some tearing down. (See Jer. 1:10.) The authority given to Jeremiah involved pulling down and uprooting as well as building and planting.

What is taken away is always worthless, sometimes positively harmful. Whatever it is, it cannot be built into the new. Among the things that will disappear with this old world will be the bitter tears and sorrow expressed in crying. In particular there will be no more death. The way is opened now for an existence that will have no end, an existence that will always be joyful.

What kind of people will not be found in the earth made new? Rev. 21:8; 22:15.

These verses show clearly how different the new earth will be from conditions that exist in the world today. Can you see why these people are not found in the kingdom?

What kind of people will be found in the earth made new? Rev. 14:4, 5; 7:14.

THINK IT THROUGH

What is the basis for believing that what God promises He will fulfill?

“Wherever we looked, everything upon which the eye rested was beautiful and holy. And all the redeemed host, old and young, great and small, cast their glittering crowns at the feet of their Redeemer, and prostrated themselves in adoration before Him, and worshiped Him that lived forever and ever.”—*Early Writings*, p. 295.

Although the earth will have no reminder of sin, there will be one evidence that forever will be with the redeemed.

“Jesus will present His hands with the marks of His crucifixion. The marks of this cruelty He will ever bear. Every print of the nails will tell the story of man’s wonderful redemption and the dear price by which it was purchased.”—*Early Writings*, p. 179.

FURTHER STUDY

Education, pp. 307-309.

Lessons for 2nd Quarter / 1978

Sabbath School members who have not received a copy of the Adult Lessons for the second quarter of 1978 will be helped by the following outline in studying the first two lessons. The title of the series is "The Path of Faith."

First Lesson

WE NEED HIM, Memory text, 1 John 1:4.

1. *Healer (John 5:6)*
2. *"A Spring of Water" (John 4:14)*
3. *"The Light of the World" (John 8:12)*
4. *"The Bread of Life" (John 6:35)*
5. *"The Good Shepherd" (John 10:11)*
6. *"The Way" (John 14:6)*

Second Lesson

WE ARE DRAWN BY HIM, Memory text, John 12:32.

1. *Light for All (John 1:9)*
2. *"Lamb of God" (John 1:29)*
3. *"Come and See" (John 1:48)*
4. *"Born of the Spirit" (John 3:8)*
5. *"Given . . . of my Father" (John 6:65)*
6. *No Orphans Here (John 14:18)*

Lessons in Braille

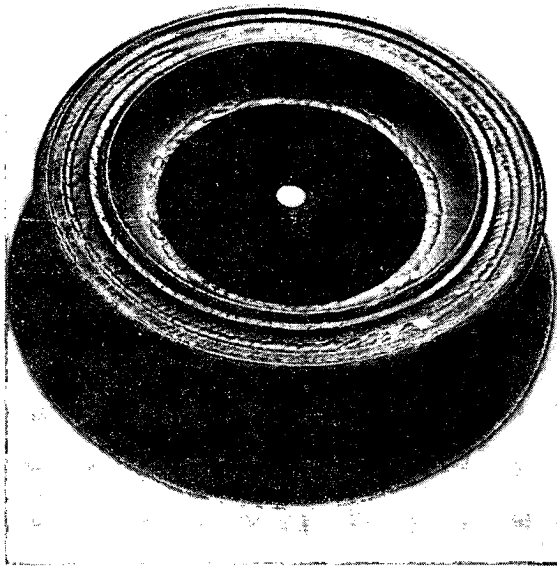
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