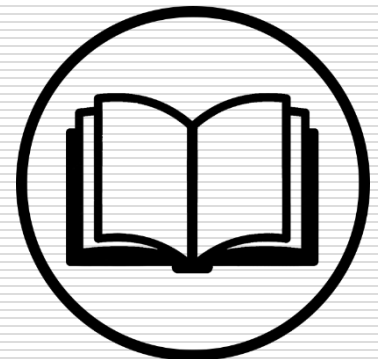


# **That's It. That's All.**

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**Where we stand theologically  
regarding creation and evolution.**

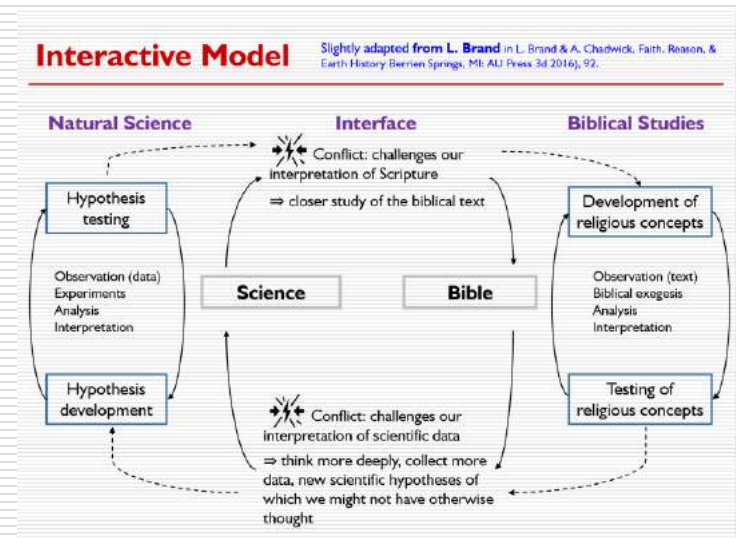
Martin Pröbstle, Ph.D.  
Faith and Science Conference 2019  
Ainsa, Spain



# Recap

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- ❑ Authority of the Bible
- ❑ Hermeneutics
- ❑ Serious Bible Study is not for Sissies
- ❑ Creation in Genesis 1 (and Genesis 2)
- ❑ Flood in Genesis 6–9
- ❑ Theistic evolution?



# The Scandal

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- ❑ Seventh-day Adventists are culprit with two most scandalous notions:
    - (1) LITERAL CREATION
    - (2) GLOBAL FLOOD
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**STATEMENT**

**AN AFFIRMATION OF  
CREATION**

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SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST<sup>®</sup> CHURCH

## An Affirmation of Creation

The International Faith & Science Conferences 2002-2004 report of the Organizing Committee to the General Conference Executive Committee through the office of the General Conference President, September 10, 2004.

### Introduction

The very first words of the Bible provide the foundation for all that follows. "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth..." Gen 1:1. Throughout Scripture the Creation is celebrated as coming from the hand of God who is praised and adored as Maker and Sustainer of all that is. "The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands."—Ps 19:1 NIV

From this view of the world flows a series of interlocking doctrines that lie at the core of the Seventh-day Adventist message to the world: a perfect world without sin and death created not long ago; the Sabbath; the fall of our first parents; the spread of sin, decay and death to the whole creation; the coming of Jesus Christ, God in the flesh, to live among us and rescue us from sin by His death and resurrection; the Second Coming of Jesus, our Creator and Redeemer, and the ultimate restoration of all that was lost by the Fall.

As Christians who take the Bible seriously and seek to live by its precepts Seventh-day Adventists have a high view of nature. We believe that even in its present fallen state nature reveals the eternal power of God (Rom 1:20), that "'God is love' is written upon every opening bud, upon every spire of springing grass."—Ellen G White, Steps to Christ, p 10

For us, all Scripture is inspired and tests all the other ways, including nature, through which God reveals Himself. We have great respect for science, and applaud the prominence of science departments in our institutions of higher learning and healthcare. We also value the work of Seventh-day Adventist scientists and researchers not employed by the church. We train students at our colleges and universities how to employ the scientific method rigorously. At the same time, we refuse to restrict our quest for truth to the constraints imposed by the scientific method alone.

### The Question of Origins

*Document prepared by the  
Organizing Committee of the  
International Faith & Science  
Conferences 2002-2004 ♦  
October 11, 2004*

# An Affirmation of Creation (2004)

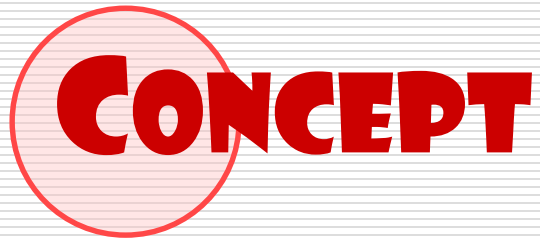
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1. We affirm the **primacy of Scripture** in the Seventh-day Adventist understanding of origins.
  2. We affirm the historic Seventh-day Adventist understanding of **Genesis 1** that life on earth was created in **six literal days** and is of **recent origin**.
  3. We affirm the biblical account of the **Fall resulting in death and evil**.
  4. We affirm the biblical account of a **catastrophic Flood**, an act of God's judgment that affected the whole planet, as an important key to understanding earth history.
  5. We affirm that our limited understanding of origins calls for **humility** and that further exploration into these questions brings us closer to deep and wonderful mysteries.
  6. We affirm the **interlocking nature** of the doctrine of creation with other Seventh-day Adventist doctrines.
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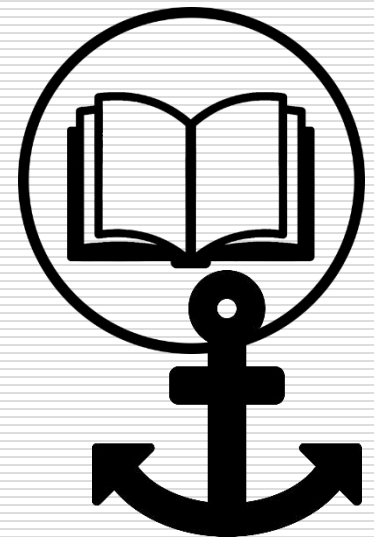
# An Affirmation of Creation (2004)

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7. We affirm that in spite of its fallenness nature is **a witness** to the Creator.
  8. We affirm Seventh-day Adventist **scientists** in their endeavors to understand the Creator's handiwork through the methodologies of their disciplines.
  9. We affirm Seventh-day Adventist **theologians** in their efforts to explore and articulate the content of revelation.
  10. We affirm Seventh-day Adventist **educators** in their pivotal ministry to the children and youth of the church.
  11. We affirm that the **mission** of the Seventh-day Adventist Church identified in Revelation 14:6, 7 includes **a call to worship God as Creator of all.**
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# ANCHORPOINTS FROM THE BIBLE





# Anchorpoints

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- ❑ God created the surface of the earth plus the atmosphere and the life on and in it in seven literal days.
    - Says nothing about whether or not God created a planet without life long before Creation week.
  - ❑ At the end of creation week there was a complete ecosystem with plants, invertebrates, birds, aquatic animals, mammals, and humans.
    - Genesis 1 identifies God as creator of life on earth.
  - ❑ The originally created world was very good (no evil present).
  - ❑ Sin had changed the biological world ... (still is).
    - Sickness, death, and other forms of evil are the results of the influence of sin and of a literal demonic beings.
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# Anchorpoints

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- ❑ A global flood destroyed many of the life forms and changed the world (again).
- ❑ All happened within a time period of thousands not millions of years.
  - Implicated by genealogies and the early human history as reported by Genesis 1 – 11.
- ❑ Jesus' miracles show that God is able to instantly restore or create human tissue and to start biochemical processes in lifeless tissue.
- ❑ A new and literal physical (re)creation of this earth is about to happen some time after the second coming of Jesus.
  - As described in Revelation 21 and 22 and foreseen in other prophetic literature.

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**OBSERVATION**

**WHY SOME ADVENTISTS  
DOUBT CREATION**

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# Why Some Adventists Doubt Creation

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1. They look at the alleged and published majority of scientists.
  2. They feel a crushing burden of evidence.
  3. They do not distinguish between data (what is found) and interpretation (evolutionary explanations of the data).
  4. They want freedom of science, which also includes freedom in theology, and, at the end of the path, may also lead to freedom from certain moral ideas.
  5. They are dissatisfied with (previous) explanations by the creationists.
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# Why Some Adventists Doubt Creation

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6. They believe that a 6-day creation is not timely.
7. They are subject to public propaganda and defamation.
  - They do not want to be lumped together as evolution opponents with "Holocaust deniers" and "climate skeptics" or "intellectual ghost drivers" who "stubbornly hide reality"

*(National Geographic Deutschland, February 2009, p.*

8. They were confronted with evolutionary thinking when studying at university (not limited to biology) and developed an acceptance for it (possibly without being able to decide cognitively).
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# Why Some Adventists Doubt Creation

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9. They find the testimony of nature contradictory.
10. They are prone to evolution because we talk too little about creation / evolution and leave the discussion field to non-believing scientist.

# How to deal with them?

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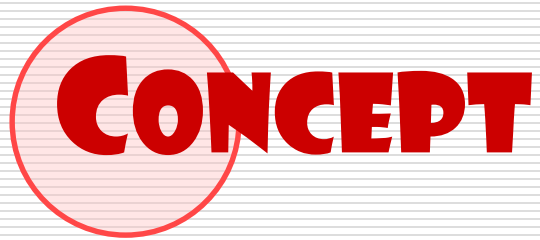
- ☐ Never, never ridicule non-creationists.
  - ☐ Seek good relations (even friendship) with people who have different views.
  - ☐ Strive for excellence in thinking and argumentation. Avoid superficialities.
  - ☐ Develop Jesus' attitude: He would want to win such people.
  - ☐ (What about Adventists who play with evolution?) Point out the consequences of their thinking.
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# Reasons against Theistic Evolution

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- ☐ Genesis 1–11 is not for spiritual insight only (hermeneutics and exegesis)
  - ☐ God created “after their kind” (“basic types”)
  - ☐ Origin of humankind
  - ☐ Good before evil
  - ☐ Origin of sin and death (no death before sin)
  - ☐ Sabbath
  - ☐ Marriage & Family
  - ☐ Salvation by Jesus to overcome death
  - ☐ Problems of the evolutionary hypothesis remain
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**CREATION'S IMPORTANCE**

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# Twelve Reasons for Creation's Importance

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## 1. Bible testifies to God's Creation

- Genesis 1, 2, ...
- This is a recognition of the Bible's authority as truth

## 2. Jesus professed Creation

- "Have you not read, that He who created *them* from the beginning made them male and female," (Matt 19:4)
- "Consequently, the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath." (Mark 2:28)

## 3. Creation and salvation are inextricably linked

- If there is no good creation, there is nothing we have lost – from what should we then be saved?
  - For the wages of sin is death (Rom 6:23)
  - The last enemy that will be abolished is death. (1 Cor 15:26)

# Twelve Reasons for Creation's Importance

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## 4. Eschatology based on protology

- NEW creation implies that there was a FIRST creation
- No intervention „in the beginning“ – Why should there be one „at the end“?
- Why should there be a tree of life (Rev 22:2)?
- “Praise the Lord . . . Who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them” (Ps 146:1, 6) // “worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water” (Rev 14:7)

## 5. Consequences for the notion of God

- God's unique character as artist, thoughtful architect, and independent Sovereign who loves humankind and blesses them abundantly stands opposite a God who guides life to a better state through an abundance of death.

# Twelve Reasons for Creation's Importance

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## 6. Consequences for the image of God, i. e. man

- Humankind is made in the image (şelem) of God, after His likeness (dēmût) (Gen 1:26, 27): the relational aspects of humanity as in the Godhead, the representation in humanity of the presence of God, and the resemblance of humans to God in both outward form and inward character.
- Created for relationship

## 7. God worthy to be worshiped

- As Creator, He is worthy of worship (Rev 14:7), of prayerful requests (Acts 4:24)

## 8. Weekly rhythm and Sabbath

- Sabbath as memorial of the seven-day-creation
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# Twelve Reasons for Creation's Importance

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## 9. Marriage & equality of man and woman & Family

- *ezer kenegdo* (Gen 2:18, 20; cp. Exod 18:4; Ps 33:20 etc.)
- bone of my bones, flesh of my flesh (Gen 2:23)

## 10. “Care for it! Care for it” – Creation care

- A strong theology of creation care (environmental concerns)

## 11. Sanctuary theme

- God created the Garden of Eden as an archetypal temple, as His satellite sanctuary on earth, the “garden of God” (Isa 51:3; Ezek 28:13; 31:9).

## 12. Authority of the Bible

- If I cannot trust the text on its first page, how can I trust it on page 2, 22, or 222?
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**By Faith**

we **UNDERSTAND** that the worlds  
were prepared by the

**WORD OF GOD**

*so that what is seen was not made  
out of things which are visible.*

**Hebrews 11:3**