**Ellen G. White and Creationism**

**How to Deal With Her Statements on Creation and Evolution:**

**Implications and Prospects**

**By Frank M. Hasel**

Script

Instructions: Advance the PowerPoint slides at every new paragraph and anywhere you see “/”

[1] Ellen G. White and Creationism—How to deal with her statements on creation and evolution, by Frank M. Hasel

[2] Dr. Hasel’s paper is divided into the following four sections

[3] Introduction

[4] The topic of how to interpret Ellen G. White’s statements on creation and evolution is important for two reasons: / She affirms the biblical teaching of a literal, historical creation / and Jesus himself affirmed the historicity and normativity of the biblical creation account.

[5] The biblical teaching of creation is a crucial belief that has far reaching consequences for the Adventist church because we are grounded on the written word of God and follow Jesus, the incarnate word of God.

[6] The doctrine of creation is so prominent in the Bible and in the writings of Ellen White and is so intimately connected with other fundamental beliefs that a change in this point inevitably will affect other foundational teachings of the Bible that we as Adventists hold.

[7] It is an article of faith on which the Adventist church stands or falls.

[8] The writings of Ellen White are not a substitute for Scripture. They cannot be placed on the same level. The Holy Scriptures stand alone—the unique standard by which her and all other writings must be judged and to which they must be subject.

[9] However, Fundamental Belief 18 goes on to say that…“Her writings are a continuing and authoritative source of truth which provide for the church comfort, guidance, instruction, and correction.”

[10] Therefore, her statements on creation and the origin of life raise crucial questions on important topics such as

* The nature and scope of inspiration
* The relationship between the writings of Ellen White and the Bible
* Proper hermeneutics
* Authority of inspired writings over against science

[11] Ellen White affirms creation

[12] Creation is not the result of natural causes. The agency of a personal God is manifest. All things were created by God. Human beings belong to God by creation. Humanity was the crowning act in God’s creation.

[13] Creation took place in six literal, historical, consecutive, contiguous, 24-hour days, not vast, indefinite periods covering thousands or millions of years. Creation week was just like every other week. The Sabbath was instituted at the close of creation week and is a memorial of creation

[14] The age of the earth is to be measured within a short chronology of a few thousand years.

[15] Those who try to account for God’s creative works upon natural principles…are upon a boundless ocean of uncertainty. / I have been shown that without Bible history, geology can prove nothing. / 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.

[16] Ellen G. White supports a recent creation of life, humans, and probably even matter

[17] In the creation of the earth, God was not indebted to pre-existing matter.

[18] Ellen White and science

[19] Ellen White is not antagonistic toward natural science. “Natural science is a treasure house of knowledge from which every student in the school of Christ may draw.”

[20] She did not keep faith and science separate from each other or relegate faith and science to different areas that have nothing to do with each other.

[21] “Rightly understood, science and the written word agree, and each sheds light on the other.” / The revealed Word of God and the natural world will be in agreement.

[22] Atheistic, evolutionary theories are incompatible with biblical faith. To connect these ideas with biblical creation would be a wrong attempt to bring natural science and Scripture into harmony.

[23] I have been warned that henceforth we shall have a constant contest. Science, so-called, and religion will be placed in opposition to each other, because finite men do not comprehend the power and the greatness of God.”

[24] “This science, falsely so-called, is based on conceptions and theories of men to the exclusion of the wisdom of God as revealed in His written Word.” / “When professedly scientific men treat upon these subjects from a merely human point of view, they will assuredly come to wrong conclusions…The greatest minds, if not guided by the word of God in their research, become bewildered in their attempt to trace the relationship of science and revelation.”

[25] “One of the greatest evils that attends the quest for knowledge, the investigations of science, is the disposition to exalt human reasoning above its true value and its proper sphere.” / “When natural causes are the sole explanation for what did take place in creation and the subsequent history of this earth, science, falsely so-called, has been exalted above God.”

[26] Ellen White opposes a naturalistic worldview of science that excludes God from scientific enterprise. / A harmonious relationship between Scripture and science can occur, however, if science is integrated into faith in such a way that Scripture is retained as the superior and ultimate authority.

[27] Reason must acknowledge an authority superior to itself. Heart and intellect must bow to the great I AM

[28] “True science is in harmony with Scripture.” / The platform from which Ellen White considered the natural sciences was the Bible. She had absolute confidence in Scripture and believed that everything, including scientific theories, had to be measured by the Word of God.

[29] “The Bible is not to be tested by men’s ideas of science, but science is to be brought to the test of the unerring standard.” / The integration of science into faith implies that faith—or Scripture—has priority over science.

[30] “Geology has been thought to contradict the literal interpretation of the Mosaic record of the creation. Millions of years, it is claimed, were required for the evolution of the earth from chaos…such a conclusion is wholly uncalled for.”

[31] While nature and science have God as their author and reveal something about Him, neither Scripture nor Ellen White attribute the quality of inspiration to nature or science. / The Bible is God’s inspired book. Nature and science are not. / To her, the Bible is the final authority.

[32] Implications and prospects for the Adventist Church

[33] On the basis of the priority and superiority of Scripture, some remarkable possibilities open up to the believing scientist and theologian. / “One who accepts the Bible as a reliable record of events is not hampered by that worldview, as many would claim, but actually has an advantage.”

[34] Faith does not prevent the believer from thinking. It rather enables the believer to think properly—according to God’s revealed will—and thus to search for creative, new solutions that are in harmony with God’s Word.

[35] Rather than adapting biblical ideas to the latest outlook in science, Scripture can have a unique influence on science by asking questions that could function as a source of inspiration in developing new strategies of scientific research.

[36] We have to remember that our faith cannot be based on science as our final authority, but must be based on God’s Word—even when we have questions without answers. / As Adventists we actually have an advantage over non-religious scientists because our worldview is broader and more open to dimensions that are closed for secular scientists.

[37] To respect the biblical creation account and the inspired insights of Ellen White on the issue of creation should motivate us to be even more careful in our scientific and theological work than perhaps a non-religious scientist might be because we accept the biblical record as inspired and thus as something intrinsically sacred. May this perspective stimulate and motivate us to do sound research and search for better answers.

[38] Is the Bible indeed our final norm and ultimate authority, as we profess in our Fundamental Belief 1? / Can we trust the Bible in statements that tell us about our salvation if those statements are dependent upon historical events and those historical statements cannot be trusted?

[39] Can we still maintain that Ellen White’s writings are “a continuing and authoritative source of truth which provide for the church comfort, guidance, instruction, and correction?”

[40] Can a God who uses an evolutionary process as His method of creation really be worshipped and adored as good and loving?

[41] In what areas are the Bible and Ellen White authoritative for the Adventist Church?

* Matters of salvation?
* Personal spirituality?
* Complex issues of God’s supernatural creation?
* The flood?
* Biblical history

[42] Does the way we as Christian scientists and theologians do science and present science and theology erode or enrich our faith in God’s supernatural creation?

[43] The answers to these questions will have consequences far beyond the issue of creation vs. evolution. It will impact many other fundamental beliefs and ultimately impact our mission and growth.

[44] Frank Hasel’s article may be found in the Journal of the Adventist Theological Society.