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Genesis:

The book of Genesis says that we are here because God created us, that our existence resulted from the purposeful act of a loving God who made us in His own image.

In 1997 a Nobel Prize-winning physicist made a stir when he wrote, “The more the universe seems comprehensible, the more it seems pointless.” Responding to the statement, one astronomer wrote, “Why should it have a point? What point? It’s just a physical system; what point is there?” Another scientist, agreeing, said, “I am willing to believe that we are flotsam and jetsam.”

Flotsam and jetsam? Yet, considering their premise—that we are here by pure chance alone—what other conclusion would they have drawn? After all, we just one day are born; eventually we become aware of ourselves—pain, fear, and hunger often being the first sensations of self-consciousness. Uninvited, life is foisted upon us without asking for it and yet remains difficult to give back if we don’t want it and impossible to retain if we do. We’re given something none sought after, planned for, or acquiesced in; we’re not sure what it is, what it means, or even why we have it; its most real and immediate givens—pain, sorrow, loss, fear—remain inexplicable.

No wonder these scientists, left to try to understand our origins on their own, see it as all pointless, a mere physical system, nothing more.

How thankful we should be, then, that the Lord hasn’t left us on our own regarding our origins. Genesis is God’s revelation to us of those origins, and it presents a view radically different from what most science presents. That science, without revelation, has determined we’re the creation of meaningless and purposeless forces is more than enough proof of how, without revelation, we get it all wrong.

Indeed, contrary to the “scientific” view, which says we’re here

Creation and Redemption

only because of pure chance, the book of Genesis says that we're here because God created us, that our existence resulted from the purposeful act of a loving and caring God who made human beings "in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them" (*Gen. 1:27*). It's hard to imagine two more conflicting, irreconcilable positions.

But Creation is only the beginning of Genesis. The book teaches us about the Fall, the global Flood, the Tower of Babel, which together help us better understand the nature of the world we have all found ourselves in without any choice of our own.

Most important, though, Genesis also tells the story of Abraham and the patriarchal line that would arise out of him, the one in whom "all the nations" shall "be blessed" (*Gal. 3:8, RSV*). Genesis doesn't focus only on the Fall and its results; instead, scattered through its pages are symbols and shadows that point to the great hope of salvation offered to God's fallen world through Jesus, a hope offered to everyone who, like Abraham, claims it by faith. Or, as Paul, steeped in Genesis, expressed it: "So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham" (*Gal. 3:9*)—the father of "all who believe" (*Rom. 4:11, NIV*).

This quarter we'll get an inspired account of the miracle that created us; we'll also get, in hints and symbols, the earliest revelations of the miracle that saves us: the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

All this is found in Genesis, a book about Creation and Redemption, not "flotsam and jetsam."

Born in Germany, the late Arthur J. Ferch immigrated to Australia, where he worked for many years as a pastor, teacher, and administrator.

Got Questions?

Sabbath School
University *has answers!*

Sabbath School University is a 28-minute discussion of the *Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide*. SSU discusses the content and strategies to enrich your Sabbath School with fellowship, outreach, Bible study, and missions. Sabbath School leaders, don't miss this weekly broadcast on Hope Channel.



www.hopetv.org



"Outposts of Hope"

Mission outreach often begins with medical care. People go to a hospital who might never enter a church.

I'm glad to know my offering will make a real difference. Songa Adventist Hospital in southeastern Congo needs a maternity ward, Kendu Adventist Hospital in western Kenya needs a surgical suite and ward, and Bugema University in Uganda needs a larger health center to minister to its students and community. Some of these people may never be introduced to Jesus any other way.

My Thirteenth Sabbath Offering on December 30 will help these medical facilities continue their mission of healing and hope. I want to help. For me, it's personal.

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