

EDITORIALS

GREAT *Conversations*

BY BONNIE DWYER

They define Adventism, earnest conversations about Scripture. That search for Present Truth. They are characterized by people with different views coming together, sharing knowledge, and all leaving energized by the discussion. Whether minds are changed is not really the point. It is the growth in understanding of each other, as well as the issue, that makes them electric, provides an “Aha” moment, binds us together. And how blessed we are by those ties. Today, they continue in Sabbath Schools, in classrooms, in our pages, particularly in this issue.

We begin with a look at Sabbath Schools and how the pandemic has changed them. The country may be opening up, but we’ve come to love our Zoom Sabbath Schools that bring together people from across the world, as well as from across town.

Revelation scholarship provides the second example. We are fortunate to now have many Revelation scholars writing not only for the Adventist community, but also for the larger Christian world. Reinder Bruinsma takes us through three recent books about Revelation, showing the variety of ways to read and experience that great book of the Bible.

Conversations about creation have marked our pages since the very first issue. Our articles have reflected the heated conversation within the community in the battle for the narrative between science against religion. Rather than expecting readers to pick a side, however, we hope these articles add to our understanding of each other. For instance, in this issue, in the article about the geologic column by John Baldwin, Leonard Brand, Felix Cortez, Randy Younker, and Elaine Kennedy, the authors seem to take a position very similar to those of the Ancient Hebrews in that God is seen as the originator of all things. The

actions of the natural world are not viewed independently. In contrast, Ronald Osborn sees the atonement of Christ as not only providing freedom for the human world but for the animal world, also. Can our understanding of the cross allow for a broader view of science? To add to the conversation about the flood, science, and God, James Hayward tells the story of two geologists, and we have two insightful book reviews. By the way, this topic will also headline a June conference at Avondale. If anyone is interested in Zooming in on the Age-of-Life Conference that Lynden Rogers is coordinating in Australia (Friday evening, June 11 to Sabbath, June 12) the person to contact is Lynden Rogers. (lynden.rogers@avondale.edu.au)

Book reviews provide the starting point for each of the topics in this issue. A recent psychobiography of Ellen G. White gives Jonathan Butler the opening for an illuminating piece not only about Mrs. White, but also about how we as readers bring our own story to hers. Ellen White biographer Terrie Aamodt writes about the greatest challenge to a biographer, and Ron Graybill lets us in on the last secrets of the Ellen G. White Estate.

Ellen White, creation, and Revelation have been conversation starters throughout Adventist history. With each generation the discussion changes, grows, and becomes new again, refreshing our bonds of friendship. Are you humming “Blessed be the tie that binds”?



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