

“Oy! What a Day I’ve had Today!”

Sunday, June 11th, 2017

Trinity Sunday

 **Genesis 1:1-2:4a (ESV)**

The Creation of the World

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form and void, **[Tohu wa-bohu]** and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God **[ruach, breath of God]** was hovering over the face of the waters.

And God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. And God saw that the light was good. And God separated the light from the darkness. God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

And God said, “Let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters.” And God made the expanse and separated the waters that were under the expanse from the waters that were above the expanse. And it was so.

And God called the expanse Heaven. And there was evening and there was morning, the second day.

And God said, “Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear.” And it was so. God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas. And God saw that it was good.

And God said, “Let the earth sprout vegetation, plants yielding seed, and fruit trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind, on the earth.” And it was so. The earth brought forth vegetation, plants yielding seed according to their own kinds, and trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. And there was evening and there was morning, the third day.

[CHANGE SLIDE]

And God said, “Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night. And

let them be for signs and for seasons, and for days and years, and let them be lights in the expanse of the heavens to give light upon the earth.” And it was so. And God made the two great lights—the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night—and the stars. And God set them in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth, to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. And there was evening and there was morning, the fourth day.

And God said, “Let the waters swarm with swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the heavens.” So, God created the great sea creatures and every living creature that moves, with which the waters swarm, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. And God blessed them, saying, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth.” And there was evening and there was morning, the fifth day.

And God said, “Let the earth bring forth living creatures according to their kinds—livestock and creeping things and beasts of the earth according to their kinds.” And it was so. And God made the beasts of the earth according to their kinds and the livestock according to their kinds, and everything that creeps on the ground according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.

Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”

So, God created man in his own image,
in the image of God he created him;
male and female he created them.

And God blessed them. And God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.” And God said,

“Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food. And to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the heavens and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.” And it was so. And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

[CHANGE SLIDE]

The Seventh Day, God Rests

Thus, the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them.

And on the seventh day God finished his work that he had done, and he rested **[nuach, today and in eternity]** on the seventh day from all his work that he had done. So, God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it God rested from all his work that he had done in creation.

These are the generations of the heavens and the earth
when they were created, in the *day* (TIME) that the
Lord God made the earth and the heavens.

This is the Word of God for the people of God.

Thanks, be to God.

[CHANGE SLIDE]

[MESSAGE]

“*Genesis*” is a Greek word for origin or beginning.

THE BOOK OF GENESIS represents a human
attempt to explain the incomprehensible – the
origin of the created world.

Even today, with all our scientific knowledge and
certainty, our greatest scholars remain
uncertain about the origin of the universe.

This is what makes Genesis so compelling for us;
it is an epic poem that seeks to help us
understand things we can never fully
understand – the things of God.

This is really the **point** of *all* Scripture – to lead us to the best understanding of God that we are capable of achieving.

When you think of epic poetry, you may be familiar with **THE ILIAD** and **THE ODYSSEY** of Homer.

These works, and others like them, exhibit characteristics common to epic stories.

The scope of the story is huge, possibly the whole known world.

Supernatural forces, gods or demons, insert themselves into the action.

They are intended to teach a larger lesson based on the conventions of the story.

The point of this epic is not to have us imagine how God managed to create the world **in six days**.

Rather, we are invited to imagine a God capable of setting Creation in motion – **period**.

How great must God be to design this, breathe life into it, and shine light from the darkness?

Let us pray...God, help us see beyond the poetry, into the very heart of your creative Spirit. Lead us to a better understanding of who you are and how you are at work in the world. In Jesus' name, we pray. **Amen.**

The image on the screen is the final panel in a seven-panel painting depicting the Creation Story.

This panel is exactly twice as big as each of the other six panels.

The artist says that he did this because he believes that God placed great importance on the act of Sabbath rest.

Imagine, after all that hard work creating the world in six days, God stops and says: ***“Oy! What a day I’ve had today!”*** And then he rested.

This story is not a scientific explanation for the universe, and it makes no claim to answer the ***“how”*** of Creation.

This epic poem is focused on the ***“who”*** and the ***“what”*** of Creation.

Renowned spiritual director Carole Crumley writes:

“Darkness, light, and new life are all aspects of our human experience. We are creatures of sunset and sunrise, of the ebb and flow of the tides of life, of darkness and light. Within our life stories and the stories of human history, there are dark sides that do not go away.

Human suffering does not go away. Also within our human stories are experiences of new life and fresh possibility brought by the overshadowing spirit, of a creative force bringing order out of chaos, the light of Christ that shines across the ages and beyond the grave.”

Genesis calls us to realize that creation begins with God; *“in the beginning, God...”*

This is God’s story, not ours; the *“who”* of Creation is **God**.

What, then, is the *“why”*? **Why did God make us?**

Paul tries to explain this to the men of Athens in Acts 17; he said that God made us so that we might seek

God, feeling our way toward God and thereby finding God.

This groping for God leads us from darkness into light through the journey of our own experience.

Paul goes on to say, “Yet he is actually not far from each one of us, for ‘In him we live and move and have our being’.” (Acts 17:27-28)

Meister Eckhart, a fourteenth-century German mystic, offers an unusual view of the Trinity in Creation.

He wrote that God the Father laughed, and the Son was born. Then the two of them laughed, and the Spirit was born. When all three laughed, the human being was born.

For Eckhart, the mystery of the Holy Trinity was surrounded by peals of golden laughter at the heart of the universe. ⁱ

We usually think of Genesis as a book about God the Father, the creative, energetic force that brings the universe into existence.

But, these verses also give us glimpses of the other two aspects of the mysterious Trinity.

The Spirit of God hovers and broods over the chaos and breathes life; the Light of God shines through the darkness and cannot be overcome by it.

Genesis looks into the heart of darkness and sees something beautiful and hopeful: a creative force, a hovering spirit, and a penetrating light that cannot be overcome.

At the end of it all, God recognizes that it is all good, and rest is a good and necessary thing.

As we contemplate the Trinity and our place in relationship with this complex God, we should wonder:

- What does your experience tell you about the Trinity?
- How would you describe the indescribable, incomprehensible mystery of the Trinity?

Whenever you feel like crying, “*Oy! What a day I’ve had today!*”, remember to rest with God, listen for that still small voice that tells you **who** and **why**.

Realize that being still and knowing God, is as essential as Creation itself.

In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

ⁱ Crumley, Carole A. FEASTING ON THE WORD, © 2011, Westminster John Knox Press, Louisville, Kentucky, Y-A, V-3, P-30