

Genesis 1:1-26 (NRSV) Six Days of Creation and the Sabbath

1 In the beginning when God created^[a] the heavens and the earth, **2**the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God^[b] swept over the face of the waters. **3**Then God said, “Let there be light”; and there was light. **4**And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. **5**God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

6And God said, “Let there be a dome in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters.” **7**So God made the dome and separated the waters that were under the dome from the waters that were above the dome. And it was so. **8**God called the dome Sky. And there was evening and there was morning, the second day.

9And God said, “Let the waters under the sky be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear.” And it was so. **10**God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas. And God saw that it was good. **11**Then God said, “Let the earth put forth vegetation: plants yielding seed, and fruit trees of every kind on earth that bear fruit with the seed in it.” And it was so. **12**The earth brought forth vegetation: plants yielding seed of every kind, and trees of every kind bearing fruit with the seed in it. And God saw that it was good. **13**And there was evening and there was morning, the third day.

14And God said, “Let there be lights in the dome of the sky to separate the day from the night; and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years, **15**and let them be lights in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth.” And it was so. **16**God made the two great lights—the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night—and the stars. **17**God set them in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth, **18**to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. **19**And there was evening and there was morning, the fourth day.

20And God said, “Let the waters bring forth swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the dome of the sky.” **21**So God created the great sea monsters and every living creature that moves, of every kind, with which the waters swarm, and every winged bird of every kind. And God saw that it was good. **22**God blessed them, saying, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth.” **23**And there was evening and there was morning, the fifth day.

24And God said, “Let the earth bring forth living creatures of every kind: cattle and creeping things and wild animals of the earth of every kind.” And it was so. **25**God made the wild animals of the earth of every kind, and the cattle of every kind, and everything that creeps upon the ground of every kind. And God saw that it was good.

26Then God said, “Let us make humankind^[c] in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth,^[d] and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.”

27So God created humankind^[e] in his image, in the image of God he created them;^[f] male and female he created them.



“Weave”

One of my favorite pictures of God’s working in our lives, especially during difficult times, is the image of God weaving a beautiful tapestry, which incorporates both light and dark colors. These colors represent a variety of emotions and experiences in the human life: joyful, sorrowful, indifferent, ecstatic, depressed, elated, and so on. On this side of heaven, though, we stand behind the tapestry and usually see only the knotted ends and frayed edges of what God is doing. If we could just get “on the other side” of the tapestry, we could see God creating something beautiful. But in this mortal life, we live looking at the underside including painful circumstances and lack of certainty of God’s purpose.

This image comes from a poem of unknown origin that was popularized by Corrie Ten Boom, author of [The Hiding Place](#). Here is the poem:

*My Life is but a weaving
Between my Lord and me;
I cannot choose the colors
He worketh steadily*

*Oft times He weaveth sorrow
And I, in foolish pride,
Forget He sees the upper,
And I the under side.*

*Not til the loom is silent
And the shuttles cease to fly,*

*Shall God unroll the canvas
And explain the reason why.*

*The dark threads are as needful
In the Weaver’s skillful hand,
As the threads of gold and silver
In the pattern He has planned.*

*He knows, He loves, He cares,
Nothing this truth can dim,
He gives His very best to those
Who leave the choice with Him.*

Take a moment and think about how this is true in your own life.

- ✎ When have you struggled to see the beauty in God’s creation because you could only see the underside of the tapestry?
- ✎ Have you struggled to believe that God was weaving anything beautiful?
- ✎ Can you think of a time when God gave you a glimpse of the “beautiful side” of the tapestry after a season of staring at the “ugly side”?

We spend a LOT of time sharing with each other about the difficult situations in life: those beyond our control; those that seem to hold us hostage; the ones that seem larger than our ability to influence or resolve; and even those difficult situations we have participated in fashioning. We are imperfect and fallible human beings, with whom God has entrusted the care of creation.

Our scripture text reminds us that God created human beings and gave them/us “dominion” over all other creatures and over the earth itself. The context of this word means that WE are charged to preserve and protect all that is precious in God’s sight. We are to be faithful stewards, good managers, of creation, so that future generations can also enjoy all of God’s gifts. For, you see, all of creation is inter-woven, inter-related, inter-connected, so that we might all thrive together, OR suffer together, AND heal together. In anything that is woven, if one thread is pulled out, the beauty of the entire tapestry is altered. Likewise, if a flaw, or tear, hole or rip is repaired, the beauty of the entire tapestry is enhanced.

In the midst of the scriptures of both the Old and New Testaments we find that “Our stewardship under God implies that we are morally accountable to [God] for treating creation in a manner that best serves the objectives of [God’s reign]; but both moral accountability and dominion over the earth depend on the [human’s] freedom to choose.”ⁱ And we are also reminded that within that state of freedom comes the opportunity to either destroy or heal facets of creation.

As a family of faith, we are particularly good at expressing our care for one another through prayer – seeking healing as we become aware of brokenness. We even pray that *we* will be vehicles through which God will offer encouragement, peace of mind, messages of hope. But I must pause and wonder if we are as attuned to praying for the healing of non-human parts of creation. Currently, the fires and floods and wars and continued harvesting of earth’s resources have cause scars upon the earth. And those scars affect all related to those places and habitats. Have we asked God to heal these scarred patches of earth? Have we sought the guidance of the Spirit in how we can contribute to that healing process? Have we considered how we might avoid creating the conditions which make the earth more vulnerable to disaster? Do we trust our Creating, Weaver God to guide and equip us to partner with God to redeem and restore even the most broken and hopeless situations? We may only have had a glimpse or vision of what the upperside of God’s tapestry looks like. So, our hope from the underside is in the trust that there is a beautiful side being created by the Master Weaver who knows, loves, and cares for all of creation.

Our challenge today is to be more intentional about three things:

1. Praying for the healing of creation;
2. Intentionally living into our responsibility of being more faithful stewards of all that God has entrusted to us; and,
3. Growing in our appreciation for the tie that binds us to God, to one another, and to all of creation.

Please join with me in the unison prayer.

ⁱ Environmental Stewardship in the Judeo-Christian Tradition, Grand Rapids: Action Institute ©2007.