



James Tissot - The Creation - circa between 1896 and 1902
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Genesis –

the coming into being

And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters,
(Genesis 1:2)

'In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth'. (Genesis 1:1) The opening words of the Judeo-Christian scriptures, written 900 to 700 years BCE or even earlier. Genesis is not a

history story in the 21st century sense, rather it records people grappling with the big events and their imaginative attempts to understand God and their relationship with God.

A question - how do you describe the Creation in a way that can be understood and remembered? Perhaps you would start with the question 'where did it all begin?'. Perhaps this is how Genesis began by asking questions and hearing stories from neighbouring cultures. Slowly, answers start to emerge and become a story worthy to be told and listened to. These stories are inspired, and yes some would say divinely inspired. They are thoughtful and imaginative stories, still worthy to be read and listened to today.

Later, in our time of reflection we read the first part of the creation story (Genesis 1:1-10), but not as a scientific text, but as a beautiful story honed, crafted together centuries ago by scholars as they tried to explain God's creative purpose.

Artists have interpreted the Creation story in differing ways. I have included three pictures from the Wikimedia Common pages

Above by the French artist Jacques Joseph Tissot, better known as James Tissot (1836-1902). In his late teens he began to use James as his Christian name. He was interested in everything English and gained a strong English following for his work. In the late 1880's he had a religious experience which led to him returning to his Catholic faith which would influence his future artistic work.



The 2016 painting by Daniel Heller who describes his painting as 'depicting the creation of the universe inspired by verses from the book of Genesis: - Now the earth was unformed and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep; and the spirit of God hovered over the face of the waters'.

Arhitectdanielheller - Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 4.0

Creation of the World by Mikalojus Konstantinas Čiurlionis (1875-1911)

He was a Lithuanian composer, painter, choirmaster, and writer. He was educated at Warsaw Conservatory and died aged 35. He painted a series of paintings on the Creation of the World.

Mikalojus Konstantinas Čiurlionis
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These pictures offer a vision of water in creation and how artists have been inspired to capture the creative nature of water.

Time for a break!



Slowly pour out a glass of water

Hear the water as it flows into the glass.

Find your favourite space for this time of prayerful reflection

Place the glass of water on a table and light a candle.

Slow down, breathe calmly, be comfortable and relax.

'Is anyone thirsty?

Come and drink - even if you have no money!

(Isaiah 55:1 New Living Translation)

Come all who are weary and let the water refresh you and may the quiet pools of God's love embrace.

In this time of quiet reflection let us read these words from Genesis it begins with

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. . . .

Then we hear of the Spirit of God hovering over the face of the waters and of light and darkness of day and night. We move onto to the place of heaven, the firmament and water.

Then God said, "Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters." Thus, God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament; and it was so. And God called the firmament Heaven. So, the evening and the morning were the second day.

Then God said, "Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear"; and it was so. And God called the dry land Earth, and the gathering together of the waters He called Seas. And God saw that it was good. (Genesis 1:1-10 NKJV)

Pause perhaps have a sip of water, read through these words from Genesis again slowly and spend time looking at the pictures. Does one stand out, if so stay with it for a while.

Prayer

Lord thank you for water, the water that you saw was good.
God of rain, of the springs and streams,
of rivers and lakes
of the waves and the sea
water for all, fresh and pure.
Guide us to use water responsibly
so all can share in your precious gift of water Amen.

When asked about how to pray Jesus gave these simple but profound words, so let them be our prayer:

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name;
Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done;
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil. Amen

Our closing hymn / song 'I the Lord of Sea and Sky'

 **YouTube** <https://youtu.be/2zr9SMm1gII?si=ij6qbvQXHqx9tbul&t=2>

Lord, pour your Spirit upon us in a gracious, healing way. Make us agents of reconciliation as we live and may we bring a blessing to those we meet. Let us go in peace to love and serve the Lord. Amen

Fr Derek Akker

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(Derek is a retired Anglican Parish Priest and a member of the congregations of All Saints & St James. Prior to his ordination he was accredited as a Methodist Preacher in 1968 and served within the Methodist Church until returning to the Anglican Church in the mid 1980's)

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Parish of Kirklees Valley, Bury, (All Saints, Elton & St James, Woolfold) - In the Diocese of Manchester

Image - Impact of a drop of water. Featured picture, Picture of the year, Picture of the day
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