

CREATION MEDITATION

Gen 1:1 (NIV) In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

Gen 1:31a (NIV) God saw all that he had made, and it was very good.

To stop falsehood from infiltrating our faith, the earliest Christian creed made it clear: "*I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.*" False teachers were saying that the *physical* world, including the body, is evil baggage, holding back our *spiritual* progress. This is not true! / BUT.... check your own mind. / Did the Apostle's Creed fail us? / Do we separate the two *good* creations of the One Creator? / Do we see God loving the *spiritual realm* more than the *physical cosmos*? / "God so loved the *cosmos* that He gave His only begotten Son," (John 3:16a). / "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven."

Gen 1:26-28 (NIV) Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground." {27} So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. {28} God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground."

Gen 2:25 (NIV) The man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame.

Male and female humanity... *created* in the likeness of their Creator with beautiful bodies, temples of flesh, where God, in fellowship with our spirits, desired to personally continue His work in the *cosmos*.../ Male and female humanity... *made* in God's image to follow His lead in creatively managing the physical world of creation. / But also, *created* naked in the likeness of the rest of the physical creation, reminding men and women of their bond with the naked creatures over which they would rule. / *created* to "fill the earth" with their own kind, a society clothed only in sunlight, with nothing to hide, / to reflect the social image of the eternal society of Three, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, dwelling together in light where nothing is hidden: total openness.

Gen 2:15 (NIV) The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.

Gen 2:19-20a (NIV) Now the LORD God had formed out of the ground all the beasts of the field and all the birds of the air. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. {20} So the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds of the air and all the beasts of the field.

Creation.... is harder to "take care of" now. The seasons get severe. Weather is often unpredictable. / There is life, but also disease, deterioration, decay, and death. / We continue to name the animals, but they rarely remember their names. Most won't even listen to us at all. Sin brought this. Human sin. O how much damage and loss sin brings into the world... the whole world. / God never intended His beautiful creation, including our own physical bodies, to ever experience decay and death. / So His plan is to renew all things... and creation eagerly awaits the first sign of that renewal: our physical resurrection.

Rom 8:19-23 (TLB) For all creation is waiting patiently and hopefully for that future day when God will resurrect his children. {20} For on that day thorns and thistles, sin, death, and decay--the things that overcame the world against its will at God's command--will all disappear, {21} and the world around us will share in the glorious freedom from sin which God's children enjoy. {22} For we know that even the things of nature, like animals and plants, suffer in sickness and death as they await this great event. {23} And even we Christians, although we have the Holy Spirit within us as a foretaste of future glory, also groan to be released from pain and suffering. We, too, wait anxiously for that day when God will give us our full rights as his children, including the new bodies he has promised us--bodies that will never be sick again and will never die.

Rom 8:24a (NIV) For in this hope we were saved.

DIVINE ECOLOGY

The creation longs for freedom
From a bondage not her own,
For the creatures in God's image
Brought the curse that makes her groan.
We, the race meant to attend her
And to govern her with care,
Have abused and plundered nature,
Adding grief to her despair.

But the LORD so loved the cosmos,
With His handiwork arrayed,
That He entered her Himself
To bear the image He had made,
Both to lead His image-bearers
Back to safety, by rebirth,
And to purchase restoration
For the heavens and the earth.

We were meant to serve in Eden,
Paradise beyond compare.
We were fashioned from her soil,
Our unfinished job is there.
The description of our duties
Was not changed the day we fell.
While awaiting her renewal,
We must work with her as well.

--- *David L. Hatton, 7/6/2007*
(from *Poems Between Birth and Resurrection*)