

If Koalas Were King

A reading intertwining the creation story of the first chapter of Genesis with a commentary on the role of human beings as stewards of God's world. For two readers.

Reader one: *In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep, and the Spirit of God was moving over the face of the waters.*

Reader Two: *(with a slightly sinister tone)* It's only a matter of time, you know, until they arrive.

One: *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 morning, one day.*

Two: Yes, they'll be here before long. I guess you could call it a divine weakness—God wanting to create a being capable of response. But with response comes decision, and with decisions come... *(darkly)* well, the possibilities are endless.

One: *And God said, "Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters." And it was so. And God called the firmament Heaven. And there was evening and morning, a second day.*

Two: T minus four days and counting. And things are moving ahead so nicely with the rest of creation. Oh, well, I guess not even God can expect every little thing to work out perfectly. *(to audience)* You say I'm being a little hard on them, but think about it: oil in the oceans, pollutants in the sky, gum on the sidewalk. Animals! No—I take that back. Animals never do such things...

One: *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. And God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together he called seas. And God said, "Let the earth put forth vegetation, plants yielding seed according to their own kind. And God saw that it was good. And there was evening and there was morning, a third day.*

Two: The third day—the first day living things appeared. Strangely enough, those who were coming—who were living beings themselves—had so little regard for other living things. It's one thing to ruin the atmosphere, or waste the soil, or foul the water. But other living things? O.k., we can understand mosquitoes. But whales and polar bears and rainforests and song birds? What did they do to deserve this?

One: *And God said, "Let there be lights in the firmament of the heavens to separate the day from the night; and let them be for signs and seasons and days and years, and let them be lights in the firmament to give light upon the earth." And God saw that it was good. And there was evening and morning, a fourth day.*

Two: Looking back, maybe they didn't actually have anything against the other living things. Maybe they just didn't think about what they were doing—and in the end, what effect their actions would have on their own kind. The rainforest plant that may have held a cure; the coral reef where the fish they eat are born; the birds that ate those bothersome mosquitoes. Ironic, no? Since *they* were supposed to be the smart ones.

One: *And God said, "Let the waters bring forth swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly across the firmament of the heavens." And God saw that it was good. And God blessed them and said, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters of the seas, and let the birds multiply on the earth. And there was evening and morning, a fifth day.*

Two: "Be fruitful and multiply." It wasn't long after *they* arrived that multiplication turned to subtraction, plants and animals going, going...or gone. The Lord giveth...they taketh away...

One: *And God said, "Let the earth bring forth living creatures according to their kinds; cattle and creeping things and beasts of the earth, according to their kinds. And it was so. 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 air; and over the cattle, and over all 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 it was so. And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good.*

Two: Makes you want to say, "Are you sure about that God? Are you sure "humans" and "dominion" go together? See any potential problems there? Maybe have another cup of coffee and rethink things a bit...?"

(slight pause, startled reaction) What's that? Sorry, didn't know you were listening...! Yes, I'm sure eternity has been a bit more interesting with them around. And you get to practice your Spanish. *(pauses as if to listen)* And you like their television shows because they say your name a lot...? That's not exactly...

What's that? You have a feeling that things may just turn around once humans see what they're doing—and that so much depends on them? Well, maybe you can see possibilities the rest of us can't—I guess that's why you get to be God, and the rest of us are, you know, not God.

But if you'll allow one little piece of advice from someone who's seen what they can do to an otherwise very pleasant planet—maybe next time, you could let the humans entertain you and do the TV shows and sharpen your Spanish, but put some other creature—like the pelicans or the koalas—in charge of the "dominion thing"? Since they realize how much they need the air and water and plants, they'd likely take better care of these things—and I think we could safely assume no more gum on the sidewalks.

If Koala's Were King

by David Radcliff

New Community Project

Newcommunityproject.org • 718 Wilder Street Elgin, IL 60123 • 888-800-2985 • ncp@newcommunityproject.org