

Creation and Desecration – Creation in Reverse

Themes: the natural world, keeping the rules, care for the environment, God's generosity and goodness to humanity, human responsibility or 'stewardship'.

And Man said...

On the seventh day before the end of the earth, man created all kinds of machines, which meant that one person could do what hundreds of people were needed to do before, and as well as that, they could do it much faster than before. And man said: "Now we can really start to improve this pathetic creation that God has given us."

On the sixth day before the end of the earth, man discovered oil, and made petrol, diesel and jet engines, and rushed about all over the earth for holidays and business trips, and poured thousands of tonnes of pollution into the air. And man said: "Everybody has the right to travel wherever they like, as often as they like, and as fast as they like - except those people who can't afford it - and even if it pollutes the earth, we'll find a better way of running the engines before the pollution gets too bad."

On the fifth day before the end of the earth, man decided that the way nature had done things ever since the beginning of creation wasn't good enough, and the land needed soaking with chemical fertilisers, and the crops spraying regularly with pesticides to stop weeds growing. And man said: "From now on these crops will be bigger and better, and they will all be ours to eat. We won't share the crops with the birds and the wild animals, and if some wildlife disappears for ever it won't matter because God made far too many types of wildlife in the first place."

On the fourth day before the end of the earth, man invented nuclear weapons to kill people and nuclear power stations to make energy. And man said: "Now that we can destroy the whole of the earth with nuclear weapons by pressing just one button, we will have peace. Now that we can make so much power from a little bit of uranium we will be able to do so many more things. By the time we have to work out what to do with all the nuclear waste we leave behind, it will be our grandchildren's problem, or maybe we'll have thought of something by then. Anyway, we didn't get where we are today by thinking too much about the future."

On the third day before the end of the earth, man invented biological weapons that made people's enemies get sick and die. And man said: "It's terrible that we should even have to think of hurting people in this way, but we have to invent them because if we don't do it, some of our enemies are bound to invent them, and we can't allow them to use the weapons against us. Of course, they will never get used on purpose, and we hope there will never be an accident which makes the weapons get out."

On the second day before the end of the earth, man discovered how to make genetically modified food. And man said: "This is the best thing we have done so far. Now we know all about making life itself, and we will be able to create anything. We will be just like God."

On the last day before the end of the earth, man finally realised that he had completely destroyed the way plants, animals and people could live on the earth. He also had no idea how he was going to get himself out of the fix he was in. And man said: "Oh God!"

And God said...

Questions for discussion and writing

1. Do you think 'man' in the story includes women? Why or why not?
2. What did people invent in the story?
3. Does everything that humans invent spoil the world? What inventions do you think are good, and why? In what ways do you think each of the things that humans invented in the story helps or spoils the world?
4. This story is similar and different to other creation stories. How?
5. God only comes in at the end of the story. Why? What difference would it make if God was in the story? What would God say at the end of each of the last seven days? Work out seven sentences for this.
6. Do you think the story gives the right impression of what humanity is doing to the world?
7. What is the message of this story?
8. Why do you think the world has problems with the environment? How do you think they are caused?
9. What do you think you can do to stop some things spoiling the earth?

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