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Holy Trinity • Genesis 1:1–2:4a • June 15, 2014

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Editor's note: at concordiatheology.org this homiletical help includes a sermon outline.

As with any pericope there are a number of directions a sermon based on this text could take. When one considers the average parishioner's familiarity with the creation account—and given that this is Trinity Sunday—one is also confronted with the reality that people will bring expectations to the service and the sermon in particular. A close reading of the biblical narrative reveals a stark contrast between the creation account in Genesis 1 and the rest of the Old Testament of God's feelings towards man. Take Genesis 6:6–7 for example:

And the LORD regretted that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart. So the LORD said, “I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the land, man and animals and creeping things and birds of the heavens, for I am sorry that I have made them.

Much has evidently changed. In five short chapters we have moved from the repeated refrain “it is good,” a refrain culminating in the Creator who steps back and declares it is “very good,” to regret over creating man and being grieved to the point of destroying not just man but much of the wider creation he delighted in. The problem may have begun with one man, but its effects have spread to the point where God decides to blot out not only man but “animals and creeping things and birds of the heavens” as well.

This impulse to undo his creation is not limited to the flood. While God promises not to destroy the world in flood again, he does bring destruction upon man and creation due to his anger over their sin. Consider Sodom and Gomorrah where God razes not only the city but “what grew on the ground as well,” or his repeated threats to destroy his own people (Exodus 32, Numbers 16), to say nothing of the repeated depictions of the “Day of the Lord” throughout the writings of the prophets.

The key to a sermon following this theme is an exploration of how God is able to declare once again that his creation is good. On Trinity Sunday, a poignant text to help with this would be one usually reserved for the cold of winter, that text of the baptism of Jesus. As the Father’s Son—he who was there at the beginning and through whom all things were made—stands in a river being baptized, the heavens are torn open, the Holy Spirit appears in the form of a dove, and the Father declares, “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased,” (Mt 3:17). It is through this man, the new Adam, that God steps back and declares of his creation “it is very good.”