

An element that I should like to highlight as a thread running through the Bible from the beginning of Genesis to the end of Revelation, one that speaks to us of the gift of life, is the *life-giving presence of water*. In the beginning the earth is like a desert, negative (Gen 2.4b-7). But there is an alternative to this situation: we now encounter a term that means “spring”, “flood water”, “torrent”. Moisture begins to open the possibility of life, there is a need for a cultivator, someone to care for things. The Yahwist writer uses the term “potter”, someone who molds and shapes the human being. This being is beloved dust of the earth. The source of human life is only God, who blows and communicates a breath that stimulates an act of internal animation. The relation between human beings and the earth is plain to see. They belong to each other, they are connected.

In Ezek 47.1-12 we are told of the water flowing from the Temple that will make fertile all the places it passes through. The fertility makes the waters able to clean and give real life. They show forth the life-giving glory of the Lord who dwells in the Temple. Wherever the water from the Temple goes forests of trees will spring up on both sides, and everything will be made fresh (vv 8-12). Life will prosper wherever the torrent reaches. There will be plenty and the leaves of the trees will not wither and their fruit will not fail, and they will have medicinal properties.

So in this way the two initial accounts of Creation have as their purpose to sustain and begin the process of love, spelt out and cared for with a view to salvation and choice. A constant is the beauty and goodness of Creation. The goodness of the creatures corresponds to the goodness of the Creator. Recognizing the goodness of the creatures means praise of their Creator. Very often we feel incapable of appreciating the beauty and goodness of what exists because we are prisoners of an economic vision that immediately raises the questions, “What use is this to me?” “How much will it bring me?”

This confronts human beings with the *alternative of life or death*. An enthralling history is set in motion in which the exercise of *freedom* is developed, that symbol and patrimony of the greatness and dignity that originates in the unconditional love of the God who makes a commitment to the world. *Theology has become aware* of this historical process, of human existence and discovery as the locus of God’s saving action and revelation, fulfilled in the event of Christ.

*Ascension Gonzales; `extract from `Towards an Eco Assumption’ 3 b 2*