

'Big Bang' c.14 billion years

Genesis 1:1-4



'In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while the Spirit of God swept over the face of the waters. God said: Let there be light! And light was. God saw that the light was good.' ...

Genesis 1:15 [our solar system: c. 5 billion years]

'Let them be lights in the dome of the sky.'



Genesis 1:20 [life: 3.8 billion years]

'God said: Let the waters bring forth swarms of living creatures,



and let birds fly above the earth across the dome of the sky.'

Genesis 1:26-27 [humans: 6 million → 200,000 years BC]

'Then God said: Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness ... So God created humankind in his image. Male and female he made them.



'God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good'(Genesis 1:31).

Genesis 2:7

‘Yahweh God formed human beings from the dust of the ground, and breathed into their nostrils the **spirit** [‘breath’] of life; and they became living beings.’



John 1:1-2



‘In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was towards [πρὸς] God, and the Word was God. The Word was towards [πρὸς] God in the beginning.’

God’s creating, life-giving **Spirit** is a **Spirit** of infinite self-giving love.

God’s **Spirit** is working within creation, holding every creature in existence, enabling it to be, and to transcend itself: to evolve in the direction of increasing complexity.

Creation is a continuous receiving of the **Spirit** of God, who gives to creation all that it is and all that it has, including the impulse to transcend itself.

‘Whenever something new arises, whenever life is awakened and reality reaches ecstatically beyond itself, in all seeking and striving, in every ferment and birth, and even more in the beauty of creation, something of the being and activity of God’s **Spirit** is manifested’(Walter Kasper, The God of Jesus Christ, 227).

Psalm 104:27-30

‘They look to you to give them their food in due season ...When you hide your face, they are dismayed; when you take away their **spirit**, they die and return to their dust. When you send forth your spirit, they are created; and you renew the face of the ground.’

Job 34:14-15

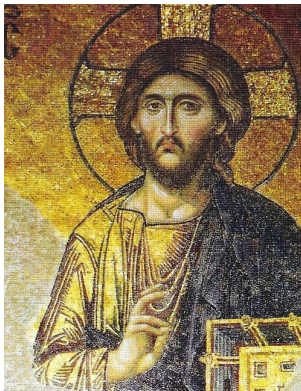
‘If God should take back his **spirit** to himself, all flesh would perish together and all mortals return to dust.’

Ezekiel 37:5-10

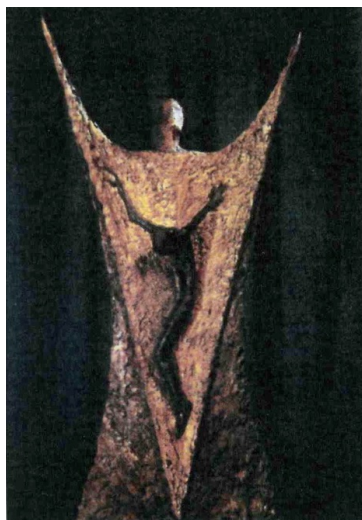
‘Thus says the Lord Yahweh to these bones: I will cause **spirit** (breath) to enter you, and you shall live. I will lay sinews on you, and will cause flesh to come upon you, and cover you with skin, and put spirit in you, and you shall live; and you shall know that I am Yahweh.’

John 1:14

‘The Word became flesh and pitched his tent among us.’

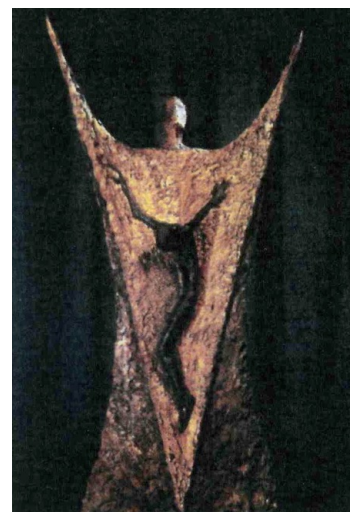


‘God gives to creatures themselves the capacity for the new. Because of God’s creative and redeeming presence to creatures, they can become something they were not. When matter comes to life on earth, when life becomes self-conscious and personal, this occurs through God enabling creation to transcend itself and become something new. Above all when one of us in the human and creaturely community, Jesus of Nazareth, is so radically open to God, so one with God, that we rightly see him as God-with-us, then we can say that in this person creation transcends itself into God’(Denis Edwards, *How God Acts*, 158).



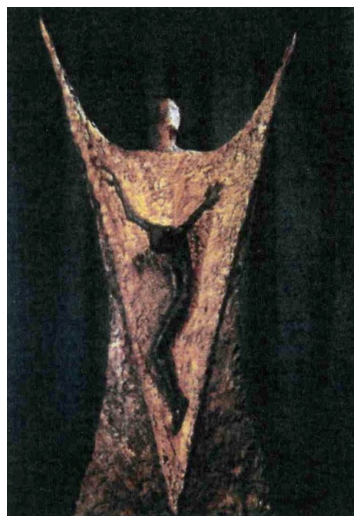
Hebrews 2:10

‘It was fitting that God, for whom and through whom all things exist, in bringing many children to glory, should make the pioneer of their salvation perfect through sufferings.’

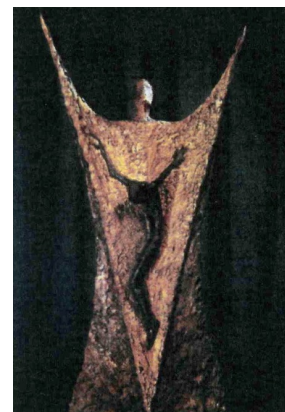


The risen Christ is the goal of evolution.

‘The Cross and Resurrection reveal the true nature of divine power, as the infinite capacity for self-bestowing love. This is love that does not overpower, but works in and through creaturely processes to bring life’(Denis Edwards, How God Acts, 33).



‘It is the very nature of God to be self-bestowing love. It is the very nature of divine power to enable the other to flourish in all the other’s integrity and proper autonomy ... What is true of divine action in the cross and resurrection of Jesus can be thought of as governing the other forms of divine action’(Denis Edwards, How God Acts, 33).



Resurrection

‘Self-bestowing love is what characterises the divine act of creation, and it is this same self-bestowing love that is revealed with the fullness of its promise in the resurrection of Jesus. The resurrection is not an intervention of God from without, but the central revelation in our history of the act by which God creates, saves, and brings all to fulfilment’(Edwards, 94).



‘The Holy **Spirit** will come upon you, Mary, and the power of the Most High will cover you in his shade (draw you into his glory); therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God’(Luke 1:35).



Mark 1:10

‘The **Spirit** descending on Jesus like a dove.’

Luke 4:14

‘Jesus, filled with the power of the **Spirit**, returned to Galilee.’

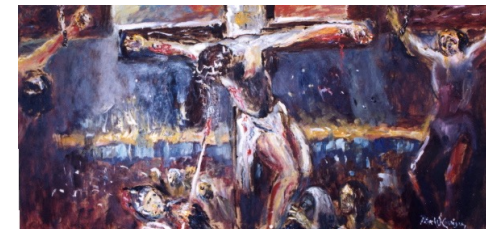
Luke 4:18-19 (Isaiah 61:1-2)

‘The **Spirit** of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners; to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favour.’



John 7:37-39

Jesus exclaimed: ‘Let anyone who is thirsty come to me, and let the one who believes in me drink. As the scripture has said, “Out of his heart shall flow rivers of living water”.’ Now he said this about the **Spirit**, which believers in him were to receive; for as yet there was no **Spirit**, because Jesus was not yet glorified.’





John 4:14

'The water that I will give will become in you a spring of water gushing up to eternal life.'

To investigate how the Spirit of God acts in creation, we should watch how the Spirit acts in Jesus, for he welcomed the inspiration of the Spirit without reserve in all the circumstances of his life.

In Jesus we see the Spirit respecting people's freedom, healing where healing was welcomed (faith), forgiving where forgiveness was welcomed (faith), inviting everyone into communion (see Luke 14:21-23), inviting everyone to cooperate in bringing about the 'reign of God' (the reign of love).

'What is needed is a theology of divine action that understands God as the one who achieves the divine purposes in and through created causes, who delights in and respects human freedom and the integrity of the natural world. By God's choice, divine action has a radically participatory character'(Denis Edwards, *How God Acts*, 24).

'The Indwelling Creator **Spirit** is present in each creature enabling it to be and to become in a world of interconnected relationships'(Denis Edwards, *How God Acts*, 6).

God does not act from the outside. God does not break in upon creation, because God is at creation's 'heart'.

God does not overturn or bypass the laws of nature. 'God's creative action enables the whole interacting network of creaturely causes and processes to exist and interact'(Denis Edwards, *How God Acts*, 46).

God is not an OBJECT of sense perception or of intellectual inquiry.

God is experienced and known as a SUBJECT, from within. We experience ourselves as gift, as given, and God is the giver.

The more we welcome and cooperate with the **Spirit** that is enabling us to be and to become, the more we become what we are created to be. The more we 'participate in divine nature'(2Peter 1:4).

Jesus reveals God as Love, as Self-giving. The more we live in communion with God the more we love, the more we transcend ourselves in self-giving.

What we observe in human behaviour is a mixture of grace and disgrace. We see what happens when people welcome grace and allow grace to have its effect, and what happens when people resist grace. The first reveals God's will. The second is sin.





‘Whoever has seen me has seen the Father ... I am in the Father and the Father is in me’(John 14:9-10).

‘I will ask the Father and he will give you the **Spirit** to be with you forever’ (John 14:16).

‘I am coming to you’(John 14:18).

‘My Father will love you and we will come to you and make our home with you’(John 14:23).

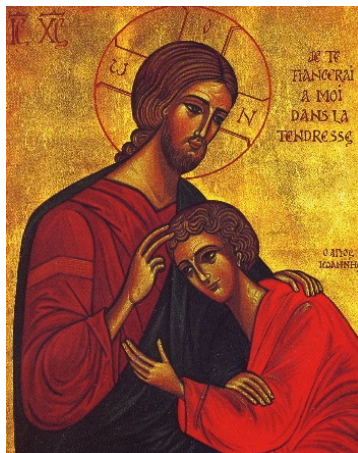
John 19:30, 34, 37

‘Jesus said: “It is finished”. Then he bowed his head and gave over his **Spirit** ... One of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once blood and water came out ... As Scripture says: “They will look on the one whom they have pierced.”



John 1:16

‘From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace.’



‘The heart of God descends in haste to his creation, with the weight of an infinite love, and the heart of creation rises towards God, drawn by an attraction that dominates all others in it.

It is in Jesus that these two hearts meet, and they unite so profoundly that the two hearts become one.’

(Jules Chevalier, ‘The Heart of Jesus, page 76)



Luke 12:49

‘I came to bring fire to the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled!’

‘From the heart of Jesus pierced on Calvary, I see a new world coming forth: a great and life-giving world, inspired by love and mercy; a world which the Church must perpetuate on the whole earth’(Jules Chevalier, 1900).

Acts 2:2-4

‘Suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. All of them were filled with the **Holy Spirit**’



Galatians 4:6

‘God has sent the **Spirit of his Son** into our hearts, crying “Abba!”(Father).’

Romans 8:9

‘The **Spirit of God** dwells in you.’

1Corinthians 6:17

‘The person who is united to the Lord becomes one **Spirit** with the Lord.’

Romans 5:5

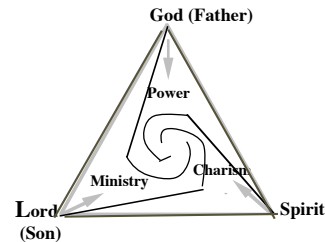
‘God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the **Holy Spirit** who has been given to us.’

Galatians 5:22-23

‘The fruit of the **Spirit** is love, joy, peace, long suffering, kindness, goodness, faith, gentleness and self-control.’

1Corinthians 12:4-7

‘There are varieties of gifts,
but the same **Spirit**;
there are varieties of ministries,
but the same Lord;
there are varieties of ways of exercising power,
but it is the same God who inspires them all
in everyone.
To each is given the manifestation of the **Spirit**
for the common good.’



2Corinthians 3:17-18

‘The Lord is the **Spirit**,
and where the **Spirit of the Lord** is, there is freedom.
And all of us, with unveiled faces,
seeing the glory of the Lord
as though reflected in a mirror,
are being transformed into the same image
from one degree of glory to another;
for this comes from **the Lord, the Spirit.**’

Romans 8:26-27

‘The **Spirit** helps us in our weakness;
for we do not know how to pray as we ought,
but that very **Spirit** intercedes
with sighs too deep for words.
And God, who searches the heart,
knows what is the mind of the **Spirit**,
because the **Spirit** intercedes for the saints
according to the will of God.’

Ephesians 3:16-17

‘I pray that the Father may grant that you be
strengthened in your inner being with power
through **the Holy Spirit**, and that Christ may dwell
in your hearts through faith as you are being rooted
and grounded in love.’

John of the Cross – Oh llama de amor viva : The Living Flame of Love

Flame, alive, compelling,
yet tender past all telling,
reaching the secret centre of my soul!
Since now evasion's over,
finish your work, my Lover,
break the last thread, wound me, and make me whole.

Burn that is for my healing!
Wound of delight past feeling!
Ah, gentle hand whose touch is a caress,
foretaste of heaven conveying
and every debt repaying:
slaying, you give me life for death's distress.

O lamps of fire bright-burning
with splendid brilliance, turning
deep caverns of my soul to pools of light!
Once shadowed, dim, unknowing,
now their strange new-found glowing
gives warmth and radiance for my Love's delight.

Ah! gentle and so loving
you was within me, proving
that you are there in secret and alone;
your fragrant breathing stills me,
your grace, your glory fills me
so tenderly your love becomes my own.

O living flame of love, tenderly wound my soul
to its deepest inner heart, without oppression.
Come, consummate our love,
tear through the veil of our union.
If it be your will come and rend the veil of the temple.

Yet gently your hand does wound
as you rend through the veil of my temple.
Come, take this life that I give,
So that I might come to live in this our dying.

O lamps of fire in deep caverns of feeling,
Once obscured and blind
Are now leading in the warmth
and the passion of Your love.