**Jeremiah 31:7-14; Ephesians 1:3-14; John 1:(1-9), 10-18**

Little Johnny was sitting on his grandpa’s lap and feeling the wrinkles on his face. Little Johnny asked, “Grandpa, did God make you?”

Grandpa replied, “Yes, God made me.”

Feeling his own smooth face Johnny asked again, “Grandpa, tell me: did God make me also?”

Grandpa said, “Of course, God did. Why did you ask?”

Johnny responded, “Don’t you think that God is doing a better job nowadays.”

This lovely conversation tells us that our loving God is doing a great job with His creation. The incarnation of the Son of God invites us to participate to that great job. Therefore, we are created as His masterpiece and the crown of his creation. We are made in His own image and likeness. Today’s Old Testament passage invites our attention to see the transforming image of the creation of a community who were catives in Babylon.

This imagery can be seen in Isaiah 41, 43 & 49. It presents a picture of Israel’s return to their home country from the bondage in Babylon. And also this image gives an impression that it doesn’t have any hazards like their ancestors had in their journey through the wilderness when they left Egypt under Moses’s guidance. God’s word in this image says that, “I will lead them to flowing stream (flowing stream = a safe journey, without any hazard) and God will watch over them as a shepherd watches his flock). God offered them a safe journey to create a new humanity in connection with a new covenant and to cultivate it in their homeland.

In the gospel passage we see that the Word of God became flesh in order to create a new humanity. As we heard from the conversation between the Little Johnny and his grandfather; God is doing a better job nowadays. Therefore, God sent his only begotten son to choose us to continue that better job.

We, members of this church are highly fortunate that God has chosen us to participate in the creation of a new humanity. The life and ministry of Jesus reflects the creation of a new humanity. In John’s gospel the incarnation of Jesus Christ is narrated clearly with a theological highlight, which portrays the objective of his incarnation. It is evidently noted in the gospel that, In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

The early fathers in the second the and third century AD, regarded God’s wisdom to be the Word of God. Jeraldo O Collins claims that the Early Christians used the Old Testament theme of wisdom when reflecting on their experience of Jesus. Proverbs 8: 22-31 personifies wisdom as the divine attribute. This passage says that wisdom existed before the world was made, it revealed God, and acted as agents in creation. It also reveals that wisdom dwelt with God, and Proverb 1: 20-33 says that wisdom addressed human beings.

In understanding and interpreting Christ, the New Testament uses various strands from these accounts of wisdom. First of all, like wisdom Christ pre-existed all things and dwelt with God (John 1: 1-2). Second, the lyric language being the breath of the divine power, reflecting the divine glory, and mirroring light (1Cor. 1: 17-18).

Heb 1: 3 personifies it as the radiance of God’s glory. Third, The New Testament applies Cosmic image to Christ; as God’s agent in the creation of the world. This we see in John1:3 – “all things were made through him, and without him nothing was made.” Similar images we can see in 1 Cor. 8:6; Col. 1:16 and Heb. 1:2. In 1 Cor.2, Paul relates the meaning of wisdom with cross and its proclamation. The early church father who had studied the life and teachings of Jesus Christ named Christ as wisdom.

The incarnation of Word on the earth is to be understood as the Creative Word, which denotes durative creation; that means an act of re-creation. From the creation account of the Book of Genesis we understand this creative power of the Word of God from his words, “Let there be…”., God said, Let there be light”; when he began his act of creation.

Let there be a dome in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters.”

“Let the waters under the sky be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear.”

“Let the earth put forth vegetation:

“Let there be lights in the dome of the sky to separate the day from the night;

 “Let the waters bring forth swarms of living creatures,”

“Let the earth bring forth living creatures of every kind:”

Then God said,

“Let us make humankindin our image, according to 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 wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.”

The traditional creation account is interpreted as referring to a single week’s activities which occurred only once a long time ago. It is as if God laboured for six days and the seventh day he took a holiday. Is God still on holidays? If creation happened only once, then the incarnation of the Word of God is only a fiction. If we can understand creation as a presently continuing process, then it might be helpful to conceive of Genesis as describing the present, and not just the past. I would like to understand this in our present age that the Creative Word of God says like this, “Let there be Humanity according to my will, let them have dominion over darkness, injustice, wars, violence, divisions and discriminations, exploitation and terrorism.” Let there be a cosmos, a family of all living and non-living beings, a divine system based on the system of sustainable living.

Yes, “Let there be……”

Let there be a journey of human beings to re-create a world where human beings maintain the rhythm of nature, and worship the Creator God along with, birds, trees mountains, rivers and oceans.

Let there be a light in the hearts of human beings to enlighten the leaders of the world in order to take measures to address the issues such as global warming and climate change.

Let there be divine wisdom in the life of human beings to use the resources of the nature not based on greed, but on need.

The sentence is not finished. “Let there be,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,.” We today stand in the midst of his holy and creative speaking, somewhere between the first syllable and the final period. And God will not close his mouth until all things are fulfilled, until all reality is consummated into his everlasting kingdom.

I began my sermon with a lovely conversation between the little Johnny and his grandfather. And again, I would like to conclude my sermon with another conversation between a father and his internet addicted son. That father noticed that his son was spending too much time on the internet.

In an effort to motivate the boy into focusing more attention on his schoolwork, the father said to his son, “When Abraham Lincoln was your age, he was studying books by the light of the fireplace.”

The son replied, “Dad, when Lincoln was your age, he was the President of the United States.”

We can become whatever we want in life and we can do the best in our life if we have the courage to pursue its achievement. Our age is not a barrier at all. We should have a burning desire. We should make the burning desire into goals in this new year. If we have a goal and are willing to work hard with prayer, we will achieve whatever we wish. Nothing will deter us from achieving our goal, because, God says, “Let there be a community of faith to carry out His will for the creation of a New Heaven and a New Earth.” Amen.

**Bush burning in Australia**

So far at least 17 people have died in blazes that have swept the country, more than 1,200 homes have been destroyed and [5.5 million hectares](https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2020/01/02/australian-bushfires-numbers-highlight-sheer-scale-unfolding/) (13.5 million acres) of land has been burnt, and millions of animals have been killed.

I would like to visit some of your houses on Wednesday after the morning service. If anybody interested to welcome me to your house on Wednesday kindly let me know.

We have AGM on coming Sunday.