

I woke up wondering about dinosaurs the other morning. The day before I had read an article in Newsweek about the fossil of the second largest dinosaur ever discovered. And also I had spent the day before mulling over the first lesson in which wisdom speaks of sharing the delight of God over what God had created. So it was that my first thought of a new day was: God created dinosaurs so that little children in our time might delight in these marvelous creatures. My second thought was: What of all the suffering dinosaurs endured, reptile killing reptile – climate change – extinction? Is the delight of children over their plastic toys worth all of that?

The very first page in the scriptures speaks of the goodness of creation. God saw everything that he had made and behold it was very good. And not only good, but full of wisdom – in the first lesson lady wisdom declares: The Lord created me at the beginning of his work, the first of his acts long ago. Ages ago I was set up, at the first before the beginning of the earth. When there were no depths I was brought forth, when there were no springs abounding with water. Before the mountains had been shaped, before the hills I was brought forth. When he established the heavens, I was there, when he drew a circle on the face of the deep, when he made firm the skies above, when he marked out the foundations of the earth, then I was beside him, like a master worker; and I was daily delight, rejoicing before him always, rejoicing in his inhabited world, and delighting in the human race.

What a wonderful picture this is: God with wisdom bringing all things into being. Life is not haphazard God's wisdom is in all that is.

When it comes to dinosaurs, though, I guess I will have to take that on faith. I cannot understand why God would create these magnificent creatures and allow them to be exterminated by climatic change. But our lesson makes clear that God has delighted in them, in all that God has made. Especially humans.

Stephen Jay Gould, paleontologist and Harvard professor, argues that humans are an accident – the product of random chance. Not the crown of creation – part of a plan which God in wisdom has set forth – but just one of a

billion possibilities – or a trillion. But God teaches us that our race is not an accident but that God in wisdom has created us, delighted in us.

Now our first lesson speaks of the whole of creation, but in our gospel Jesus is speaking to eleven disciples. He speaks at a moment in time when the goodness of creation is not very obvious. Soon soldiers will seize him, and religious leaders will condemn him and political authorities will put him to death. One might think that God's delight in the human race in the moment of Jesus' crucifixion would have run its course.

But on that night Jesus spoke these words: I still have many things to say to you but you cannot bear them now. When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own but will speak whatever he hears, and he will declare to you the things that are to come.

What does the Spirit teach? The truth about dinosaurs? No, the truth about Jesus.

Jesus' suffering and death is not haphazard, an accident. Chaos does not rule over all but God rules over all. Even over the dying of his only Son.

And now Jesus has poured that same Spirit of truth over you, into you that you might know the truth about creation, and Jesus, and yourself. For just as creation is not an accident – a senseless progression of coming into being and passing into nothingness, so you are not an accident, but your life is shaped in the wisdom of God.

And just as Jesus' living and dying were not ruled over by a mindless mob, so your living and dying will be caught up into the plans and purposes of God.

And just as God raised Jesus from the dead, God will raise you out of every abyss, and every defeat. God's love will hold you and lift you and bring you to God forever, for God's love is Jesus given to you through God's own Spirit.

One day God may explain all about dinosaurs to us all but this day God's gives you Jesus that you might be certain that your life is caught up in the plan and wisdom and truth and love of God. Amen.