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Perspectives



The Earth In Flood

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I have been bloody for so long that I feel only relief at the first splash of the flood waters. What starts as a washing fast becomes a drowning. I gasp in and spit out lakes as the widening pools steadily obscure my face. Oceans gush and snap back onto themselves, and hurricanes blow across the surface of the water at nothing.

My skin cracks and shifts as the ground drinks to its limit and beyond. Whole countries shiver and slide onto one another. I brace and wait for the violent cleansing to end in my demise, wait to break into wounded pieces and fall into the sun.

Forty days later, the rain at last stops. I am too exhausted to be surprised by my continued existence.

The echoes subside; I listen to myself and hear only the slosh of the oceans. I can see the sea creatures in the murk, continuing their life cycles unaffected, muted as always by the weight of the water. They cannot know the new silence the way that I do.

Man was an unceasing roar for centuries. They pock-mocked my skin with shallow graves dug for the bodies of those they murdered. The pounding of chariots and armies bruised my face, and blood choked out the grass across entire valleys.

Now, I look up through the new oceans at the bodies suspended above me. Calmed by death, they lie in the arms of the tide, carried above the landscapes they once ravaged. For the first time, death feels good and right.

Water sinks and rises from hidden springs beneath the ground. I sigh, and the water bubbles. The wash and rhythm began the long work of renewal.

I can hear a bright music, mesmerizing and sweet. Looking, straining, I finally find a wooden speck that is a boat.

The pleasantness of human speech is a luxury that I forgot during the centuries of battles and screams. Even more astounding in beauty is the lilt of praise. It moves through the air in elegant waves, upward and away, escaping the atmosphere as no other sound can. I can see it moving into space, changing and then traveling further until I can no longer see it, on its way to its invisible Hearer. I listen for days and then weeks and then months.

At last, I feel the water soaking in, burying itself once again. My face feels different: cleaner, colder. Bodies of man and beast settle into the muck, and I catch the ark on a fingertip of rock. Noah emerges.

A frenzy of rainbows tears the sky. The colors distract me, arching over desert and tundra, over ten thousand bodies of water. My entire population looks up from Ararat, sees one rainbow, and is content.

But I can see the criss-cross of colored light forming a net around me. In the calm of a near-empty world, for a moment, I hear my Maker singing to Himself as He writes His promise over and over again, for His own pleasure.