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Genius

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The second day is firmament and waters. I don't know the Hebrew words (inflexions), so I found myself depicting a tree on which the waters of earth sing in harmony with the ripples of heaven, the sky. I don't know how to explain this, but as the drawing evolved, and later the colors, the concentric "ripples" of the sky grew from the yet uncreated flame on top of the hill. The unexplainable Mystery is a very generous designer and teacher. Compassion is in her house (Prov. 8), and she serves up a feast to those with open hearts.

I must have been listening when I was drawing the third day. I didn't think of it that way, but the drawing did come automatically. It was immediately obvious how I would represent the day God created vegetation. It's a sturdy fertile tree, centered, like the tree of life in the garden of the universe. It is the axis mundi, life and death in one image. Its branches—interwined with the concentric contours of heaven—reach up toward the ultimate source of life, a fertile flame on the hill. I look at the tree now and imagine a dance more wondrous than 50 sets of Celtic feet flying, and tapping in step with the eternal cadence. We are bound for that dance, and it is good.

The fourth day represents our assurance that God is keeping time. Scripture reminds us to pay attention to the day and night, the sun, moon and stars, the signs and the seasons. The trunk of this tree grows like a river, meandering where it will and leaving a path for us to follow. God is not out there somewhere, but in our lives daily, showing us the signs and encouraging us to follow. We wait and we watch for our time to be taught (Ecclesiastes 3).

Fish and fowl appear in day five, nearly repeating the theme of the second day. At times it's difficult to distinguish in the picture, between birds and fish. They move together as the creatures of water and air and each assumes a unique role in the story. This too is good.

The sixth tree is nearly barren, and perhaps it should be. I hadn't intended an ecological or environmental statement, but it's worth the consideration. There are simply too many creatures to place in the sixth day, but never too many to celebrate the gifts of the designer. And doesn't it figure that the human figures are "borrowing" nearly the only leaves left on the tree. I admit this day is unfinished. Perhaps it is my prayer for a day of blessing, a day that's good beyond explanation.

And how does one picture the Eternal at rest? I decided on a sacred flame nestled at the top of a mountain, and casting a rainbow-like spectrum over all of creation. The flame is a fertile green, a reminder of spring. It yields an everlasting growth like peace that passes all understanding. That's why the story of Creation continues. God blessed the work with a signature, and it's in everything, and it's in us. We are privileged now and then to see God in that signature, and we are prompted to tell the story again, even if it is a mystery. It's how I often feel when I begin work on a blank drawing or painting. I may not understand what is about to happen, but I embrace the mystery nonetheless. The spirit of the work is alive, and I've learned to trust that the story will unfold in time. This is an incomprehensible blessing I hope I can never explain.

The (story doesn't) End.