



CONNECTING WITH CREATION DEVOTIONALS

By: Stephanie Diep

Water

God Provides and Cleanses/Heals Us

Water is essential for all life on Earth. Cultures like Japanese and Jewish practices involve bathing as a type of ritual because more than physical cleansing the act of bathing should also be relaxing and spiritually cleansing.

Read Exodus 17:1-7

At the LORD's command, the whole community of Israel left the wilderness of Sin and moved from place to place. Eventually they camped at Rephidim, but there was no water there for the people to drink. So once more the people complained against Moses. "Give us water to drink!" they demanded.

"Quiet!" Moses replied. "Why are you complaining against me? And why are you testing the LORD?"

But tormented by thirst, they continued to argue with Moses. "Why did you bring us out of Egypt? Are you trying to kill us, our children, and our livestock with thirst?"

Then Moses cried out to the LORD, "What should I do with these people? They are ready to stone me!"

The LORD said to Moses, "Walk out in front of the people. Take your staff, the one you used when you struck the water of the Nile, and call some of the elders of Israel to join you. I will stand before you on the rock at Mount Sinai. Strike the rock, and water will come gushing out. Then the people will be able to drink." So Moses struck the rock as he was told, and water gushed out as the elders looked on.

Moses named the place Massah (which means "test") and Meribah (which means "arguing") because the people of Israel argued with Moses and tested the LORD by saying, "Is the LORD here with us or not?"

What does this passage reveal about God? Why is water important?

God is in control

Water can sometimes be dangerous in the form of floods, storms, deep oceans, and raging rapids. Water is powerful and can damage sturdy structures in tsunamis or gradually over time. But Jesus showed that God is in control of even the storms.

Read Mark 4:35-41

That day when evening came, he said to his disciples, "Let us go over to the other side." Leaving the crowd behind, they took him along, just as he was, in the boat. There were also other boats with him. A furious squall came up, and the waves broke over the boat, so that it was nearly swamped. Jesus was in the stern, sleeping on a cushion. The disciples woke him and said to him, "Teacher, don't you care if we drown?"

He got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, "Quiet! Be still!" Then the wind died down and it was completely calm.

He said to his disciples, "Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?"

They were terrified and asked each other, "Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!"

What does water signify in this passage? What does this reveal about God's power?

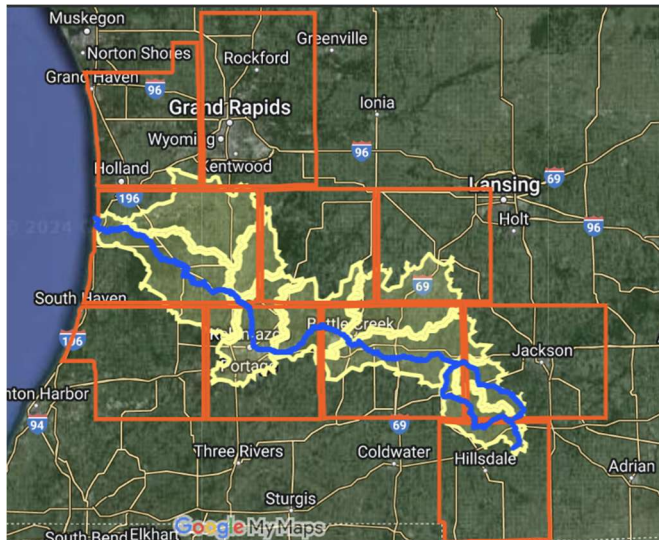
Water is Holy/Essential for Life

Read the poem at the link by Natalie Diaz, a Mojave (Aha Makav) native from Colorado about people's connection to the Colorado River (["The First Water is the Body"](#)).

In Kalamazoo, all things drain to the Kzoo River and eventually Lake MI. Water that falls from the sky flows over the ground or through drainages to our rivers and soaks into the ground to replenish the aquifer where our drinking water comes from.

Water is deeply spiritual for many cultures with specific rivers like the Ganges River in India and bodies of water like the Dead Sea in the middle east used for spiritual practices and healing. Yet, the Ganges River is one of the most polluted rivers in the world.

Reflecting on the idea of "living water" and the actual water that lives in our bodies and the sources of water that we drink. What would it look like to treat water as sacred?



Kalamazoo River Watershed in yellow. Kalamazoo River in Blue.

Our Responsibility to Care for the Water

In the Anishinaabe (Native Americans of the Midwest) culture, women are designated as water protectors because women have a connection with the water in the womb and help provide life. Their responsibility to the water includes advocating against pollution of our water ways, praying and singing healing over our waters, and practicing water ceremonies to remind everyone of the sacredness of sister water.

Play the recording: <https://youtu.be/KC2FHciQ0sU?si=m8ceuiEiXCGxBi4b> This is the water song that the Anishinaabe have shared for everyone to sing as a practice of thanking water and building a relationship with our water.

Sing the Water Song: “Water, we love you. Water, we thank you. Water, we respect you.” Repeat to each cardinal direction). This song can be done anytime to show gratitude to our sister water.

What can you do every day to cherish and thank the water you drink? What ways can you help protect our local rivers, lakes, and aquifers?