



God saw that it was **BUEN**

God Saw that It was Good

Coasts

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"Some went out on the sea in ships;
they were merchants on the mighty waters.
They saw the works of the LORD,
his wonderful deeds in the deep." (Psalm 107v22-23)

So say the ancient words of a song. Perhaps, people have always been drawn to the sea. A place of separation. Of tranquillity, wonder and awe. Places of uncertainty, fluidity.

The creation story of the Bible describes God gathering the sea in one place so that dry land appears. Solidity, speaking of the certainty of God, in contrast to the slip through your finger fluidity of the sea. And while after the story of the flood, God promised Noah that never again will the sea rise up to engulf the land, the separation is never complete. For the seas powerful hands claw away at rocks of mountains and cliffs, exposing rock layers laid down through eons of time at the bottom of ancient oceans. The sea reveals rocks fluidity, plastic, its layers twisted and broken, lifted up, tilted down by tectonic forces that shape the Earth.

Coasts reveal unstoppable power. Power that exposes human frailty in the face of divine majesty and might. Yet, there is joyful, playfulness also. In the sweeping tides of the sea's fingers that caress the land, ebbing and flowing twice daily. Responding to the dance of Earth, Moon and Sun. Gravity pulling land and sea. In the playful, in between world of the tides, life emerged from the oceans - plant then animal - as

divine playfulness shaped the community of life through evolutions game. Uncertainty in an uncertain place bringing new possibilities, expressing God's life-giving breath in myriads of created forms. Even complete aliens worlds found in the rock pools - anemones, whelks, mussel, crab, shrimps, limpets - living within the playful uncertainty daily.

As sea caresses, claws at the land, life giving nutrients laid down in ancient oceans are returned. Land feeding the sea, enabling flourishing of life in hidden abundance which only now our scientific explorations are beginning to reveal. An invitation to extend our appreciation of the joyful diversity of God's creative handiwork.

Coasts are playful places. We are drawn to play in their beaches and walk along their magnificent headlands and cliffs. Peer into countless rock pools. They draw us. They cause fear in us. And between these two, they invite us.

It was on the coast that Jesus' invited fisherfolk, Peter, Andrew, James and John to leave their boats and nets to become fishers of people. And in the bewildering times following Jesus' death and rumours of an empty tomb, he met them on a beach to renew the invitation to walk within the purposes of God. They made a living from the sea's fruitful abundance. Yet they knew the fragility of empty nets and life.

In our day, the seas abundance is ravaged by overfishing. From pollution, as fertiliser is washed from land to sea, causing algae to bloom, depleting oxygen levels, causing the desertification of the oceans. Plastic litter the beaches, floats on the seas surface, is found even in its deepest depths, infecting the food chain. And as the Earth warms due to rising levels of human released Carbon Dioxide, the seas are lifted up, fertile lands and livelihoods poisoned by salt or washed away entirely.

In such an age, as we walk by the sea, and as Jesus' meets us there what is his invitation to us in our bewilderment to share in God's purpose?