

Aaron Douglass, *The Creation*, 1935



****First Question First****

What is *your* immediate reaction to this artwork?

Trust it. Write about it. Use the guide sheet for help.

Continue reading for another perspective and journal questions.

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Death can shine a light on our basic beliefs, the scaffolding upon which we support and grow our lives. For some, it can shake core religious faith. We may not even realize the suppositions we live under until our loved one's death brings them screaming to the forefront: "I try to be a good person. Why did this happen?" "A loving God would never have allowed him to suffer like he did." "Why pray anymore? God turned away when I needed him most!"

A hand reaching down. A face looking up. In *The Creation*, Aaron Douglass' suggestive work may point to this moment of religious doubt, perhaps even crisis. The lone man does not reach up in response. Is he wary of grand gestures, answers from on high? While the atmosphere is alive in movement, the color range is narrow and expressively subtle. Restrained and hesitant. Still, a sign of life emerges; a small plant begins to grow next to him.

Q.) Have your religious beliefs gone through changes in response to the death of your loved one? Write about these transformations. What has surprised you in your faith?