

Climate Change Living Talmud

Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai said, three things are of equal importance: earth, humans, and rain. Rabbi Levi ben Hiyata said: ... to teach that without earth, there is no rain, and without rain, the earth cannot endure, and without either, humans cannot exist (Genesis Rabbah, 13:3)

If there is a needy person among you... do not harden your heart and shut your hand against your kin. Rather, you must open your hand and lend whatever is sufficient" (Deuteronomy 15:7-11).

‘And the Lord God took the man and put him into the Garden of Eden to work it and watch of it’ (Genesis 2:15). The undefiled world was given over to man ‘to work it’ to apply to it his creative resources in order that it yield up to him its riches. But alongside the mandate to work and subdue it, he was appointed its watchman to guard over it, to keep it safe to protect it even from his own rapaciousness and greed. Man is not only an *aved*, a worker and fabricator: his is also a *shomer*, a trustee who according to halachah, is obligated to keep the world whole for its true Owner. ~ Norman Lamm, Yeshiva University

"The land shall not be sold forever; for the land is Mine; you are strangers and sojourners with me." (Leviticus 25:23)

In any case the terms *avodah* and *shmirah* include not only the direct work and care of the ground, but also the whole moral behavior of Man in acting and refraining from acting in accordance with his duty. Indeed, as already indicated, Nature itself finds its appointed purpose promoted, as well as the necessary condition for its continuance.
~ Samson Raphael Hirsch, Modern Orthodox Movement

"Do not subvert the rights of your needy" (*Exodus* 23:6)

"Do not favor the poor or show deference to the rich" (*Leviticus* 19:15)

God took the man and placed him in the Garden of Eden, to till (*L'aved*) it and tend (*L'shmreh*) it." (Genesis 2:15).

We do not inherit the earth from our ancestors, we borrow it from our children.
~Native American Proverb

When God created the first human beings, God led them around the garden of Eden and said: Look at my works! See how beautiful they are, how excellent! For your sake I created them all. Take care not to spoil or destroy My world, for if you do, there will be no one to repair it after you. (*Midrash Ecclesiastes Rabbah* 7:13)

"In the end, our society will be defined not only by what we create, but by what we refuse to destroy." - John C. Sawhill, former President and CEO of the Nature Conservancy

