



## Canfei Nesharim

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### Whose World Is It, Anyway?

Beresheis 1:31

וַיֵּרָא אֱלֹקִים אֶת-כָּל-אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה, וְהִנֵּה-טוֹב מְאֹד

And G-d saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good.

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Beresheis 1:28

וַיְבָרֶךְ אֹתָם, אֱלֹקִים, וַיֹּאמֶר לָהֶם אֱלֹקִים פְּרוּ וּרְבוּ וּמְלֵאוּ אֶת-הָאָרֶץ, וְכִבְשֶׁהָ; וַיְרֹדוּ בְדִגְתַּי הַיָּם, וּבְעוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם, וּבְכָל-חַיָּה, הַרֹמֶשֶׂת עַל-הָאָרֶץ.

And G-d blessed them, and G-d said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply, replenish the Earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the Earth.”

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Beresheis 2:15

וַיִּקַּח ד' אֱלֹקִים, אֶת-הָאָדָם; וַיִּנְחָהוּ בְּגֶן-עֵדֶן, לְעִבְדָּהּ וּלְשִׁמְרָהּ.

And the L-rd G-d took [vayanicheyhu] the man and put him into the Garden of Eden, to work it [l'ovdah] and to protect it [l'shomra].

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Bereishis 1:26-2:1

And G-d said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth. So G-d created man in His own image, in the image of G-d created He him; male and female He created them. And G-d blessed them, and G-d said to them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves upon the earth. And G-d said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, on which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for food. And to every beast of the earth, and to every bird of the air, and to every thing that creeps upon the earth, where there is life, I have given every green herb for food; and it was so. And G-d saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

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Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them.

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## Rashi Bereishis 1:26

And let him dominate the fish of the sea.	וַיְרֵדוּ בְּדָגַת הַיָּם.
This expression [וַיְרֵדוּ] has [the meaning of]	לְשׁוֹן רִידוּי וְלְשׁוֹן יְרִידָה:
ruling and descending.	וְנָקָה,
[If he is] meritorious,	רוֹדֵה בְּחַיּוֹת וּבְבֵהֵמוֹת,
[then] he has dominion over the beasts and cattle.	לֹא נָקָה,
[If he is] not meritorious	נִעֲשֶׂה יָרֹד לְפָנֵיהֶם,
[then] he becomes subjugated to them	וְהָחִיָּה מוֹשְׁלָת בּוֹ:
and the beast has dominion over him.	

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### *Hilchot Malachim, Chapter 6, Halahot 8 and 10*

נח אין קוצצין אילני מאכל שחוץ למדינה, ואין מונעין מהם אמת המים כדי שייכשו... ולא כמצור בלבד, אלא בכל מקום, כל הקוצץ אילן מאכל דרך השחתה... אבל קוצצין אותו, אם היה מזיק אילנות אחרות, או מפני שמזיק בשדה אחרים, או מפני שדמיו יקרים, לא אסרה תורה, אלא דרך השחתה...

וְיֵי וְלֹא הָאֵילָנוֹת בְּלִבְדָּ, אֲלֵא כֹל הַמִּשְׁבֵּר כְּלִים, וְקוֹרֵעַ בְּגָדִים, וְהוֹרֵס בָּנִין, וְסוֹתֵם מַעֲיָן, וְמַאֲבֵד מֵאֲכָלוֹת דֶּרֶךְ הַשְּׁחָתָה...

You should not cut down fruit trees that are in a place outside the state (i.e. where you are waging war), and you should not block the water canal in order that it will dry up...

This prohibition does not just pertain to the case of besieging a city, but also to any situation where you would chop down a fruit-bearing tree in a wanton destructive manner... But if you chop down the tree because it was harming other trees or because it was harming someone else's field or perhaps because it held financial value (i.e., to sell its wood) – it would be permitted. The Torah did not prohibit anything except wanton destructiveness...

(The prohibition of cutting down fruit trees) extends not just to trees only, but also to anyone who breaks utensils and rips garments and destroys a building or blocks up a spring and wastes food in a wantonly injurious manner....

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### **Parable of the Artisan (Bava Kamma 9.3)**

The question is asked in the Mishna: If an artisan is given material to fashion and ruins it instead, is he obligated to pay? If he is given the vessel to repair and broke it, he must, but what if he is given raw material and he makes a vessel and then breaks it. Does he have to pay? Most say he does because the artisan is paid to improve the material and watch over the finished vessel. He has no rights to the vessel. It doesn't belong to him. This applies to the world we live in. Hashem is the owner, man is the artisan, and the world is a blank canvas - raw material. Man is commissioned to create but it doesn't belong to him. Man is a paid trustee over his products and must guard/watch them.

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**Sefer HaChinuch, Parshat Shoftim, Mitzvah 529**

שרש המצוה ידוע שהוא כדי ללמד נפשנו לאהב הטוב והתועלת ולהדבק בו ומתוך כך תדבק בנו הטובה ונרחיק מכל-  
דבר רע ומכל-דבר השחתה: וזהו דרך החסידים ואנשי מעשה - אוהבים שלום ושמים בטוב הבריות ומקריבים אותן  
לתורה ולא יאבדו אפילו נתיר של חרדל בעולם. ויצר עליהם בכל-אבדון והשחתה שיראו ואם יוכלו להציל-יצילו כל-דבר  
מהשחית בכל-כחם

The root of the Mitzvah (Bal Tashchit) is well known – that it is to teach our souls to love the Good and the Greater Value and to cling to it. Therefore we should attach ourselves to the good and distance ourselves from anything that is bad and any type of destruction. This is the path for Hasidim (Righteous People) and People of Good Deeds – who love Peace and are happy with the goodness of the Creation and draw themselves close to Torah. They do not ever waste anything, even a kernel of mustard. They should fashion themselves in such a way that any wastefulness or destruction that they see – if they are able to (save) prevent it – they should save it from all forms of destructiveness with all their energy.

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**Devarim 22:6-7**

כִּי יִקְרָא קֵן צִפּוֹר לְפָנֶיךָ בַּדֶּרֶךְ בְּכָל עֵץ אוֹ עַל הָאָרֶץ, אֶפְרָחִים אוֹ בִּיצִים, וְהָאִם רֹבֶצֶת עַל הָאֶפְרָחִים, אוֹ עַל הַבִּיצִים-- לֹא תִקַּח הָאִם, עַל הַבָּנִים. שְׁלַח תְּשַׁלַּח אֶת הָאִם, וְאֶת הַבָּנִים תִּקַּח לָךְ, לְמַעַן יֵיטֵב לָךְ וְהֶאֱרַכְתָּ יָמֶיךָ.

If a bird's nest happens to be before you on the road, on any tree or on the ground – young birds or eggs – and the mother is roosting on the young birds or the eggs, you shall not take the mother with the young. You shall surely send away the mother and take the young for yourself, so that it will be good for you and you will prolong your days.

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**Koheles Rabba 7:13**

“ראה את מעשה האלקים” כי מי יוכל לתקן את אשר עותו, בשעה שברא הקב"ה את אדם הראשון נטלו והחזירו על כל אילני גן עדן ואמר לו ראה מעשי כמה נאים ומשובחין הן וכל מה שבראתי בשבילך בראתי, תן דעתך שלא תקלקל ותחריב את עולמי, שאם קלקלת אין מי שיתקן אחרך.

“Observe G-d's doing! For who can straighten what He has twisted?” At the time when G-d created Adam, He took him around the trees of the Garden of Eden, and He said to them, “Look at My works! How beautiful and praiseworthy they are. Everything that I have created, I created for you. Take care not to damage and destroy My world, for if you damage it, there is no one to repair it after you.”

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