

you shall destroy and cut them down, and you shall build siegeworks against the city that makes war with you until it is subdued.

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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 אחריך.

“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.”

Hashem gave us a world that was “very good” and asked us to take care of it. Consider:

- More than half of the world’s major rivers are seriously depleted and polluted. Nearly all of the rivers in the land of Israel are depleted or polluted.
 - 1.8 million people die worldwide each year due to urban pollution. In Israel, more people die from air pollution in metropolitan areas in Israel than from traffic deaths in all of Israel in a given year.
 - 13,000 species are listed as threatened or endangered with extinction or as species of concern under the Endangered Species Act, more than 100 times what they would be without human intervention.
 - Large predatory fish in our oceans have been reduced to a mere 10% (by mass) of pre-industrial levels. A recent study predicted that global commercial fisheries may run out of fish by the year 2048.
 - Eleven of the last twelve years (1995-2006) rank among the 12 warmest years in the instrumental record of global surface temperature (since 1850). The total temperature increase to-date is about 1.4 F.
 - As a result of carbon dioxide from fossil fuel burning and land clearing, numerous long-term changes in climate have already been observed at continental, regional, and ocean basin scales.
 - Scientists have concluded with 90% certainty that most of the observed increase in globally averaged temperatures since the mid-20th century is due to human greenhouse gas emissions.
 - In Israel, climate change effects will include temperature increases, reduction in precipitation, shortened rainy season, and increased frequency and severity of extreme climate events.
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What can I do?

Transportation:

Think twice before purchasing another car.
Choose a fuel-efficient, low-polluting car.
Whenever practical, walk, bicycle, or take public transportation.

In Your Home:

Reduce the costs of heating and hot water.
Install efficient lighting and appliances.
Use compact fluorescent light-bulbs.
Use timers on Shabbos.
Only use washing machines and dishwashers with a full load.

Food:

Buy organic produce when it is available.
Eat less red meat.
Eat more sustainable seafood. Learn about better fish to eat for the environment at www.oceansalive.org

In Your Purchases:

Ask your electricity supplier for renewable energy.
Buy paper with the highest “post-consumer waste” percentage available.
Stop buying bottled water and use tap water (with filter, if needed).

Make a difference! Create and support environmental programs in your community.

Learn More!

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