

In order to encourage Care for Creation the following quotes have been assembled for inclusion in congregational publications such as Weekly Bulletin, Newsletters, emails and other creative communications: Please make selections based on your needs and size available for printing.

They have been divided into a couple of sections: Hebrew Scriptures and Talmud, Christian Scriptures and writings, selections from other religious/spiritual traditions and literary sources.

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A tag line at the end would be appreciated. -Researched by EcoSpirit.org

Hebrew Writings:

The sending of rain is an event greater than the giving of the Torah. the Torah was a joy for Israel only, but rain gives joy to the entire world, including animals and birds. – Midrash Psalms 117 (second century CE)

Whoever destroys anything that could be useful to others breaks the law of *bal tashhit*, “Do not waste.” – Babylonian Talmud, *Kodashim 32a (2nd or 3rd century CE)*

Every blade of grass has its angel that bends over it and whispers, “Grow, grow.” – The Talmud (5th century.)

To pray is to take notice of the wonder, to regain a sense of the mystery that animates all beings. Prayer is our humble answer to the inconceivable surprise of living... our gratefulness for witnessing the wonder, for the gift of our unearned right to serve, to adore, and to fulfill.”

– *Abraham Joshua Heschel (1907-1972), American rabbi and theologian*

You visit the earth and water it abundantly; you make it very plenteous; the rivers of God is full of water. You prepare the grain, for so your provide for the earth.

The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament shows God’s handiwork.

On day tells its tale to another, and one night imports knowledge to another, Although they have no words of language, and their voices are not heard, Their sounds have gone out into all lands, and their message to ends of the world. — Psalm 19 1-4 BCP

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While the sage, Honi, was walking along a road, he saw a man planting a carob tree. Honi asked him, " How long will it take for this tree to bear fruit?" "70 years," replied the man. Honi then asked, " Are you so healthy a man that you expect to live that length of time and eat its fruit?" The man answered, " I found a fruitful world because my ancestors planted it for me. Likewise, I am planting for my children." — Babylonian Talmud, Taanit 32a second or third century

Christian Writings:

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. - The Apostles' Creed (first Century)

Love alone is capable of uniting living beings in such a way as to complete and fulfill them for it alone takes them and joins them by what is deepest in themselves.

Teilhard de Chardin

Jesus said; "Go into all the world and proclaim the good news to the whole creation." -Mark 16:15 (NRSV)

Think of us in this way, as servants of Christ and stewards of God's mysteries. – I Corinthians 4:1 (NRSV)

The initial step for a soul to come of knowledge of God is contemplation of nature. –Tertullian (160-ca. 230 CE) *De Testimonio Animae*

Irenaeus (120 -202 CE) Nature is the schoolmistress, the soul the pupil: and whatever one has taught or the other has learned has come from God –the Teacher of the teacher. –

By the greatness and the beauty of the creatures, proportionately the Maker of them is seen. – Athanasius (297-373 CE), *Against the Heathen* 45:1-2

I want creation to penetrate you with so much admiration that wherever you go, the least plant may bring you the clear remembrance of the Creator...One blade of grass or one speck of dust is enough to occupy your entire mind in beholding the art with which it has been made. – Basil the Great (329-79), *Hexaemeron*, Homily V, "The Germination of the Earth."

The world has been created for everyone's use, but you few rich are trying to keep it for yourselves. For not merely the possession of the earth, but the very sky, the air, and the sea are claimed for the use of the rich few.... The earth belongs to all , not just to the rich. – Ambrose of Milan (340-97), *De Nabuthe* 3

Whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about *these* things.

– *Philippians 4:8*

Holy Spirit
giving life to all life,
moving all creatures,
root of all things,
washing them clean,
wiping out their mistakes,
healing their wounds,
you are our true life,
luminous, wonderful,
awakening the heart
from its ancient sleep.

– *Hildegard of Bingen (1098-1179), German abbess*

All that is sweet, delightful, and amiable in this world, in the serenity of the air, the fineness of seasons, the joy of light, the melody of sounds, the beauty of colors, the fragrancy of smells, the splendor of precious stones, is nothing else but Heaven breaking through the veil of this world. — William Law (1686-1761) “Rules for Living a Holy Life”

We give you thanks, most gracious God, for the beauty of the earth and sky and sea; for the richness of mountains, plains, and rivers; for the songs of birds and loveliness of flowers. We praise you for the good gifts and pray that we may safeguard them for our posterity. Grant that we may continue to grow in our grateful enjoyment of your abundant creation, to the honor and glory of your Name, now and forever. —The 1549 Book of Common Prayer

I wish you could come here and rest a year in the simple unmingled love-fountains of God. You would return with fresh truth gathered and absorbed from pines and waterfalls and deep-singing winds, and you would find that they all sang of fountain love, just as did Jesus Christ. — John Muir (1838-1914), “My First Summer in the Sierras”.

Let us turn our eyes to the Father and Creator of the universe, and consider the total absence of any friction that marks the ordering of His whole creation—Clement of Rome (ca. 37-101), Letter to the Corinthians 1:19

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Q. What are we by nature?

A. We are part of God's Creation, made in the image of God.

Q. What does it mean to be created in the image of God?

A. It means that we are free to make choices: to love, to create, to reason and to live in harmony with creation and with God.

Catechism of the *Book of Common Prayer 1979*

When we begin to be attentive to the work of the Creator, it can transform the way we are alive to the lessons unfolding around us. We notice purpose and intention behind the beauty. There is form and structure and order in creation, but there by the hand of the Chief Gardner who tends it. Seen from a distance, the natural world may look crazy and chaotic-just a jungle to us-and yet, nature is much more dependent and interdependent than we might think. —“Living in Rhythm: Following Nature's Rule”, Br. James Koester, SSJE

Having 'enough' is not an amount. It's a state of being. — Lynne Twist

Holy God, you are always with us.

Open our eyes to your presence. —Daily Prayer for All Seasons, Church Publishing, 2014, p.121

Focus on Wisdom and do not be distracted. Watch the patterns of creation, and you will be awakened to grace and tranquility. — Daily Prayer for All Seasons, Church Publishing, 2014, p.125

All you works of God, bless your creator;
Praise her and glorify her for ever.

Let the wide earth bless the creator;
Let the arching heavens bless the creator;
Let the whole body of God bless the creator;
Praise her and glorify her for ever.

You returning daylight, bless your creator;
Twilight and shadows, bless your creator;
Embracing darkness, bless your creator;
Praise her and glorify her for ever.

Let all who live and grow and breathe
Bless our creator,
Praise her and glorify her for ever.
—Janet Morley, excerpted from “all Desires Known, p.37

For the beauty of the earth,
For the beauty of the skies,
For the love which from our birth
Over and around us lies;
Christ our God, to thee we raise
This our sacrifice of praise.

For the beauty of each hour,
Of the day and of the night,
Hill and vale and tree and flower,
Sun and moon, and stars of light:
Christ our God, to thee we raise
This our sacrifice of praise

— Folliot Standford Pierpont (1835-1917)

Other Faith & Spiritual Traditions:

Many and Great, O God, are thy works,
maker of earth and sky;
thy hands have set the heavens with stars;
thy fingers spread the mountains and plains.
Lo, at thy word the waters were formed;
deep seas obey thy voice.

Grant unto us communion with thee,
Thou star-abiding one;
Come unto us and dwell with us;
With thee are found the gifts of life.
Bless us with life that has no end,
Eternal life with thee.

—Many and Great “Dakota Hymn”; Episcopal Hymnal 1982, Hymn 385

So, we are engaged in an ongoing struggle, a search for a new relation to the earth. It is also an old relationship: to be in and of place, to truly inhabit the land rather than just live on it. Why is it important? The answer is all around us in the destruction of habitats, species, and individual beings, often done out of ignorance, greed, and fear. The answer is also inside us, in a psychological rupture from the physical matrix of our life — nature and our bodies. And the answer is in the way we treat each other: our debasement and abuse of nature is linked with our debasement and abuse of people. To heal the social and the psychological, we need to heal our relationship with the earth. And vice versa. As Buddhism teaches, all of life is a mutual co-arising: everything conditions and is conditioned by everything else. —David Landis Barnhill, b. 1949

All beings tremble before violence. All fear death, all love life. See yourself in others. Then whom can you hurt? What harm can you do? —Buddha

The world grows smaller and smaller, more and more interdependent... today more than ever before life must be characterized by a sense of Universal Responsibility, not only nation to nation and human to human, but also human to other forms of life. —The XIV Dalai Lama

We need to live as the Buddha taught us to live, in peace and harmony with nature, but this must start with ourselves. If we are going to save this planet we need to seek a new ecological order, to look at the life we lead and then work together for the benefit of all; unless we work together no solution can be found. By moving away from self-centeredness, sharing wealth more, being more responsible for ourselves, and agreeing to live more simply, we can help decrease much of the suffering in the world. —the Buddhist Statement on ecology 1996

If a Muslim plants a tree or sows seeds, and then a bird, or a person or an animal eats from it, it is regarded as a charitable gift (sadaqah) for him.” – Imam Bukhari.

Abdullah ibn `Abbas reported that the Prophet said, “The believer is not he who eats his fill while his neighbor is hungry.” Authenticated by Al-Albani

When asked about how the Prophet of Islam used to live in his house, the Prophet’s wife, `A’ishah (Radi Allahu Ta’ala Anha), said that he used to repair his own shoes, sew his clothes and carry out all such household chores done without complaint or want for more. (Authenticated by Al-Albani).

The idea behind this was to show Muslims that menial tasks (mehna) were not degrading for God’s Prophet (peace be upon him). Reusing and repairing things instead of always buying new is not a sign of poverty, they are a sign of power. By performing household duties, the Prophet (peace be upon him) was saying we can build foundations on less ‘stuff’, we are in control of what we consume and we don’t need more.

A man felt very thirsty while he was on the way, there he came across a well. He went down the well, quenched his thirst and came out. Meanwhile he saw a dog panting and licking mud because of excessive thirst. He said to himself, “This dog is suffering from thirst as I did.” So, he went down the well again, filled his shoe with water, held it with his mouth and watered the dog. Allah appreciated him for that deed and forgave him.” The

Companions said, “O Allah’s Messenger! Is there a reward for us in serving the animals?” He replied: “There is a reward for serving any living being.” – Imam Bukhari.

This we know,
All things are connected
Like the blood which unites one family...

Whatever befalls the earth, befalls the sons and daughters of the earth.
Man did not weave the web of life; he is merely a strand in it.
Whatever he does to the web, he does to himself. – Ted Perry, inspired by Chief Seattle

Literary References:

If the world is to be saved, it will be saved by people with changed minds, people with a new vision. It will not be saved by people with old minds and new programs. It will not be saved by people with the old vision but a new program.... What I’m saying is that the world will not be saved by people with programs. If the world is saved, it will be saved because the people living in it have a new vision. —The charter “B” in the “The Story of B” by Daniel Quinn (pp 48 & 49)

Walking lightly on the earth is not only a form of honoring the life force that created the dust from which we all were made, but it is also the ultimate form of humility.
— Renée Miller

Conservation is a cause that has no end. There is no point at which we say, “Our work is finished”. -Unknown

i thank You God for most this amazing
day: for the leaping greenly spirits of trees
and a blue true dream of sky; and for everything
which is natural which is infinite which is yes

(i who have died am alive again today,
and this is the sun's birthday; this is the birth
day of life and love and wings: and of the gay
great happening illimitably earth)

how should tasting touching hearing seeing
breathing any—lifted from the no
of all nothing—human merely being
doubt unimaginably You?

(now the ears of my ears awake and
now the eyes of my eyes are opened)
— *e. e. cummings* (1894-1962), *American poet*

I see skies of blue and clouds of white

The bright blessed day, the dark sacred night

And I think to myself what a wonderful world.

—Written by Bob Thiele & George David Weiss

Sung by Louis Armstrong

The best remedy for those who are afraid, lonely or unhappy is to go outside, somewhere where they can be quiet, alone with the heavens, nature and god. Because only then does one feel that all is as it should be... I firmly believe that nature brings solace in all troubles. —Anne Frank's Diary

A human being is part of a whole, called by us, Universe, a part limited in time and space. He experiences himself, his thoughts and his feelings as something separated from the rest; a kind of optical illusion of his B consciousness. This delusion is a kind of prison for us, restricting us to our personal desires and affections for a few persons nearest to us. Our task must be to free ourselves from this prison by widening our circle of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole nature in its beauty. — Albert Einstein

If we surrendered to the Earth's intelligence we could rise up rooted, like trees. —Rainer Maria Rilke

The purpose of life is to love and to increase our knowledge of the intricacies of creation. Kindness is the way of God. —Zurvan a character in "Servant of the Bones" by Anne Rice

Kindness and compassion toward all living things is the mark of a civilized society.— Cesar Chavez

The creation of a thousand forests is in one acorn.—Ralph Waldo Emerson

When I step into the quiet of Big Sur, I am able to hear what matters; my heartbeat, whispers of the wind, God. And with earth footsteps I imagine sending a prayer of gratitude and love into the earth below me which then radiates into the hearts of all creatures, around me, both human and non. Not just those I love, but everyone. Everything. —Rich Veum

