

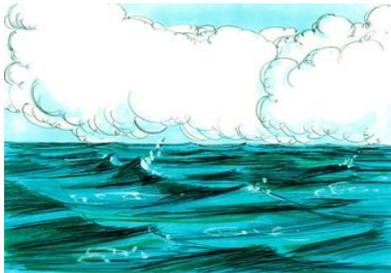
eat the delicacies” of the Babylonian king. The positive result shows up in only ten days: “it was observed that they appeared better and fatter than all the young men who had been eating the royal rations” (Dan. 1:15). The vegetarian diet is now increasingly linked to environmental concerns.

We don’t have to solve the “global warming debate.” Our motivation for creation care is completely different. For we choose to live within beneficent divine principles, appreciatively caring

for the world we share with all life. Scriptural motives for creation care, grounded in thankfulness for the divine gift of life in all its forms, are far advanced of contemporary environmental ethics. Creation

care isn’t just good stewardship, it is being everything God created us to be. Instead of being human-centered, animal-centered or environmentally-centered, we are

Creator-centered, singing the doxology with that vast creation chorus: “Praise Him **all creatures here below!**”



**Reference:**

<sup>1</sup> Very few have any conception of the violence and brutality that is inflicted on animals in order to gratify a carnivorous diet. “Think of the cruelty to animals that meat eating involves, and its effect on those who inflict and those who behold it. How it destroys the tenderness with which we should regard these creatures of God! The intelligence displayed by many dumb animals approaches so closely to human intelligence that it is a mystery. The animals see and hear and love and fear and suffer. They use their organs far more faithfully than many human beings use theirs. They manifest sympathy and tenderness toward their companions in suffering. Many animals show affection for those who have charge of them, far superior to the affection shown by some of the human race. They form attachments for man which are not broken without great suffering to them. What man with a human heart, who has ever cared for domestic animals, could look into their eyes, so full of confidence and affection, and willingly give them over to the butcher’s knife? How could he devour their flesh as a sweet morsel?” Ellen White, *Ministry of Healing*, pp. 315, 316.

**“When we heal the earth, we heal ourselves.” –David Orr**

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# The Stewpot

A potpourri of practical ideas to help you become a better steward.

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## ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

By Jo Ann Davidson, PhD

**Introduction by Dr. Gordon Botting:**

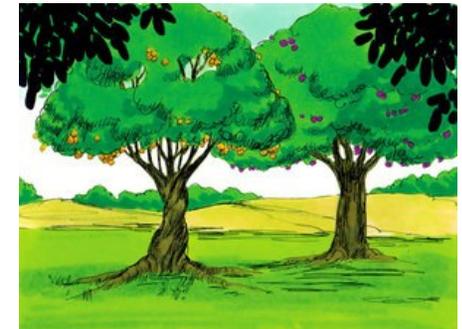
*This month we continue our two-part series on what the Scriptures say about our relationship to our environment.*

### ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP - Part 2

Promises of Eden’s restoration pointedly include the animals:

*“The wolf will lie down with the lamb, and the leopard with the young goat, and the calf and the young lion will feed together, and a little boy will lead them. The cow and the bear will graze . . . and the lion will eat straw like the ox. The nursing child will play by the hole of the cobra, and the weaned child will put his hand on the viper’s den. They will not hurt or destroy in all My holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD ...” (Isa. 11:6-9).*

This “theology of life” is also found in the New Testament. Jesus speaks of His affection for animals, stressing that even the lowliest of creatures is loved: “Are not five sparrows sold for



two pennies? And not one of them is forgotten before God?” (Lk. 12:6; cf. Matt. 10:29) —echoing Psalm 84 where sparrows are welcome in God’s tabernacle!

Jesus illustrated an important environmental lesson when, after miraculously feeding thousands with a small boy’s lunch, He commanded that all leftovers be carefully gathered up so “that nothing is lost” (Jn. 6:12).

The Apostle Paul esteems creation: “For by Him all things were created that are in heaven

Stewardship is a total lifestyle. It involves our health, time, talents, environment, relationships, spirituality, and finances.

and that are on earth, visible and invisible. . . . All things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist” (Col. 1:16-17). Paul also speaks of future environmental renewal, reiterating Old Testament sentiments that all of creation is suffering from human sin:



and the sea, saying; Do not harm the earth, the sea, or the trees till we have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads” (Rev. 7:1-3).

For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God. . . . because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now (Rom. 8:19-22).

In the final book of Scripture, the entire created world is dramatically encompassed with divine judgment. Four angels are described in Revelation 7—“. . . standing at the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, on the

sea, or on any tree. Then I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God. And he cried with a loud voice to the four angels to whom it was granted to harm the earth

The earth, sea, and trees are singled out—the three great ecosystems that the Creator put in place to sustain life: earth [soil/food]; sea [water, fundamental for life]; trees [the “lungs of the earth”/supplying oxygen and cleaning the air].

After the seventh trumpet sounds in Revelation 11, the twenty-four elders cry out against those who have wrecked havoc on creation: “We give You thanks O Lord God Almighty . . . Because You have taken Your great power and reigned. . . . You should reward Your servants the prophets and the saints . . . And should destroy those who destroy the earth” (Rev. 11:17-18). The Apocalypse concludes with the resplendent restoration the Old Testament promised

earlier—reminding again that redemption brings the renewal of God’s original creation. The material world participates in salvation!

Redemption is never depicted as escaping from the earth, but rather, reclaiming it!

Throughout Scripture we are never allowed to forget the profound value that God places on creation. Environmentalists outside the Christian tradition are often unsuccessful arguing for such high worth. Secular materialists believe the world unfolds as an endless process. Pantheists argue God is eternally

immanent with this world. Atheists think the world evolved by chance out of matter. New Agers worship the earth as divine. Buddhists and Christian Scientists believe the world is an illusion. By contrast, SDAs believe God created this world with lavish care, declaring it “very good” (Gen. 1:31)—ever since remaining a concerned “landlord.” Biblical writers extol creation. The Levites sang in sanctuary worship: “Thou, even thou, art Lord alone; thou hast made heaven, the heaven of



heavens, with all their host, the earth, and all things therein . . . and thou preservest them all” (Neh. 9:6). God is active in and through all of creation, “for in him we live and move and have our being” (Acts 17:28). Only during the 20<sup>th</sup> century did environmental thinking slowly begin to broaden beyond human concerns.

Creation and Christianity have one God. Thereby it should not be surprising that environmental issues are embedded in Scripture. Humans, created in God’s image, could be revealing the character of their Creator as they care for

creation. We could be composting, recycling (as God always has), making sure no food is wasted (for every meal is a miracle!)—and especially returning to the original violent-free diet of Eden.<sup>1</sup> Isaiah recounts why the original diet of Eden will be restored: “They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain, For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, As the waters cover the sea (Isa. 11:6-9). Even in ancient Babylon, when Daniel and his friends refuse to