

Bible Verses on Creation Care

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The Bible is the foundational narrative for Christian faith and practice. It tells the story of God's creating the heavens and the earth and of God's loving care in redeeming a fallen people and restoring creation to its pristine beauty so that it can once again glorify the Creator. As such it is replete with references to the creation and to the interconnected relations among God, humans, and the creation. The following selections are taken from the NIV and NRSV.

1. God's Relation with Creation

A. God Created the Universe

"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth... God saw all that he had made, and it was very good." (Genesis 1:1, 31)

"You made the heavens, even the highest heavens, and all their starry host, the earth and all that is on it, the seas and all that is in them. You give life to everything, and the multitudes of heaven worship you." (Nehemiah 9:6)

"He spreads out the northern skies over empty space; he suspends the earth over nothing. He wraps up the waters in his clouds, yet the clouds do not burst under their weight. He covers the face of the full moon, spreading his clouds over it. The pillars of the heavens quake, aghast at his rebuke. By his power he churned up the sea.... By his breath the skies become fair.... And these are but the outer fringe of his works; how faint the whisper we hear of him! How then can we understand the thunder of his power?" (Job 26:7-9, 11-14)

"How many are your works, O Lord! In wisdom you made them all; the earth is full of your creatures. There is the sea, vast and spacious, teeming with creatures beyond number—living things both large and small." (Psalm 104:24-25)

"Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made." (John 1:3)

Christ "is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him." (Colossians 1:15-16)

"In these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe." (Hebrews 1:2)

B. God Owns the Creation

"To the LORD your God belong the heavens, even the highest heavens, the earth and everything in it." (Deuteronomy 10:14)

"Yours, O Lord, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the majesty and the splendor, for everything in heaven and earth is yours." (1 Chronicles 29:11)

"Everything under heaven belongs to me." (Job 41:11)

"The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it; for he founded it upon the seas and established it upon the waters." (Psalm 24:1-2; cf. Psalm 89:11; 1 Corinthians 10:26)

“For the Lord is the great God, the great King above all gods. In his hand are the depths of the earth, and the mountain peaks belong to him. The sea is his, for he made it, and his hands formed the dry land.” (Psalm 95:3-5)

C. God Loves the Creation

“He loves righteousness and justice; the earth is full of the steadfast love of the LORD. By the word of the LORD the heavens were made, and all their host by the breath of his mouth.” (Psalm 33:5-6)

“The LORD is good to all; he has compassion on all he has made.... The LORD is faithful to all his promises and loving toward all he has made.” (Psalm 145:9, 13; cf. Psalm 145:17)

D. God Values the Creation

“God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good.” (Genesis 1:31)

E. God Sustains the Creation

“In his hand is the life of every creature and the breath of all mankind.” (Job 12:10)

“You care for the land and water it; you enrich it abundantly. The streams of God are filled with water to provide the people with grain, for so you have ordained it. You drench its furrows and level its ridges; you soften it with showers and bless its crops. You crown the year with your bounty, and your carts overflow with abundance. The grasslands of the desert overflow; the hills are clothed with gladness. The meadows are covered with flocks and the valleys are mantled with grain; they shout for joy and sing.” (Psalm 65:9-13)

“He makes springs pour water into the ravines; it flows between the mountains. They give water to all the beasts of the field; the wild donkeys quench their thirst. The birds of the air nest by the waters; they sing among the branches. He waters the mountains from his upper chambers; the earth is satisfied by the fruit of his work. He makes grass grow for the cattle, and plants for man to cultivate—bringing forth food from the earth.” (Psalm 104:10-14)

“He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.” (Colossians 1:17)

“The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word.” (Hebrews 1:3)

F. God Redeems the Creation

“If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land.” (2 Chronicles 7:13-14)

“When you hide your face, they are terrified; when you take away their breath, they die and return to the dust. When you send your Spirit, they are created, and you renew the face of the earth.” (Psalm 104:29-30)

“The Lord will surely comfort Zion and look with compassion on all her ruins; he will make her deserts like Eden, her wastelands like the garden of the Lord.” (Isaiah 51:3; cf. Isaiah 41:18-20; Ezekiel 36:35)

“He must remain in heaven until the time comes for God to restore everything, as he promised long ago through his holy prophets.” (Acts 3:21)

“The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed. For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God.” (Romans 8:19-21)

“Through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross.” (Colossians 1:20; cf. Ephesians 1:10)

2. God's Relation with Animals

A. God's Covenants with Animals

“I now establish my covenant with you and with your descendants after you and with every living creature that was with you—the birds, the livestock and all the wild animals, all those that came out of the ark with you—every living creature on earth.” (Genesis 9:9-10)

“In that day I will make a covenant for them with the beasts of the field and the birds of the air and the creatures that move along the ground. Bow and sword and battle I will abolish from the land, so that all may lie down in safety.” (Hosea 2:18)

B. God's Concern for Animals

“And of every living thing, of all flesh, you shall bring two of every kind into the ark, to keep them alive with you.” (Genesis 6:19)

“Six days you shall do your work, but on the seventh day you shall rest, so that your ox and your donkey may have relief.” (Exodus 23:12; cf. Deuteronomy 5:14)

“You shall not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain.” (Deuteronomy 25:4)

“Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies? Yet not one of them is forgotten in God's sight.” (Luke 12:6; cf. Matthew 10:29)

C. God's Promise to Animals

“The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat, the calf and the lion and the yearling together; and a little child will lead them. The cow will feed with the bear, their young will lie down together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox. The infant will play near the hole of the cobra, and the young child put his hand into the viper's nest. They will neither harm nor destroy on my holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.” (Isaiah 11:6-9)

3. Humans' Relation with Creation

A. Command to Care for Creation

“The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.” (Genesis 2:15)

“You must keep my decrees and my laws.... And if you defile the land, it will vomit you out as it vomited out the nations that were before you.” (Leviticus 18:26, 28)

“The land itself must observe a sabbath to the Lord. For six years sow your fields, and for six years prune your vineyards and garner their crops. But in the seventh year the land is to have a sabbath of rest, a sabbath to the Lord.... The land is to have a year of rest.” (Leviticus 25:2-5; cf. Exodus 23:10-11)

“The land shall not be sold in perpetuity, for the land is mine; with me you are but aliens and tenants. Throughout the land that you hold, you shall provide for the redemption of the land.” (Leviticus 25:23-24)

“If you follow my statutes and keep my commandments and observe them faithfully, I will give you your rains in their season, and the land shall yield its produce, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit.” (Leviticus 26:3-4)

“You shall not pollute the land in which you live.... You shall not defile the land in which you live, in which I also dwell; for I the LORD dwell among the Israelites.” (Numbers 35:33-34)

“If you besiege a town for a long time, making war against it in order to take it, you must not destroy its trees by wielding an ax against them. Although you may take food from them, you must not cut them down. Are trees in the field human beings that they should come under siege from you?” (Deuteronomy 20:19)

B. Humans Have Defiled the Land

“I brought you into a plentiful land to eat its fruits and its good things. But when you entered you defiled my land, and made my heritage an abomination.” (Jeremiah 2:7)

“How long will the land lie parched and the grass in every field be withered? Because those who live in it are wicked, the animals and birds have perished.” (Jeremiah 12:4)

“It will be made a wasteland, parched and desolate before me; the whole land will be laid waste because there is no one who cares.” (Jeremiah 12:11)

“Is it not enough for you to feed on the good pasture? Must you also trample the rest of your pasture with your feet? Is it not enough for you to drink clear water? Must you also muddy the rest with your feet?” (Ezekiel 34:17-18)

“There is no faithfulness, no love, no acknowledgment of God in the land. There is only cursing, lying and murder, stealing and adultery; they break all bounds, and bloodshed follows bloodshed. Because of this the land mourns, and all who live in it waste away; the beasts of the field and the birds of the air and the fish of the sea are dying.” (Hosea 4:1-3)

“We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time.” (Romans 8:22)

C. Consequences of Defiling the Land

“He turned rivers into a desert, flowing springs into thirsty ground, and fruitful land into a saltwaste, because of the wickedness of those who lived there.” (Psalm 107:33-34)

“Woe to you who add house to house and join field to field till no space is left and you live alone in the land. The LORD almighty has declared in my hearing: ‘Surely the great houses will become desolate, the fine mansions left without occupants. A ten-acre vineyard will produce only a bath of wine, a homer of seed only an ephah of grain.’” (Isaiah 5:8-10)

“The earth dries up and withers, the world languishes and withers, the heavens languish together with the earth. The earth lies polluted under its inhabitants; for they have transgressed laws, violated the statutes, broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore a curse devours the earth; its inhabitants suffer for their guilt.” (Isaiah 24:4-6)

"You have polluted the land with your whoring and wickedness. Therefore the showers have been withheld, and the spring rain has not come." (Jeremiah 3:2-3)

"The nations were angry; and your wrath has come. The time has come for judging the dead, and for rewarding your servants the prophets and your saints and those who reverence your name, both small and great—and for destroying those who destroy the earth." (Revelation 11:18)

4. Creation's Relation with the Creator

A. Creation Testifies of the Creator

"Ask the animals, and they will teach you, or the birds of the air, and they will tell you; or speak to the earth, and it will teach you, or let the fish of the sea inform you. Which of these does not know that the hand of the Lord has done this? In his hand is the life of every creature and the breath of all mankind." (Job 12:7-10)

"The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they display knowledge. There is no speech or language where their voice is not heard. Their voice goes out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world." (Psalm 19:1-4; cf. Psalm 97:6)

"Ever since the creation of the world his eternal power and divine nature, invisible though they are, have been understood and seen through the things he has made. So they are without excuse." (Romans 1:20)

B. Creation Praises the Creator


"Let the heavens rejoice, let the earth be glad, let the sea resound, and all that is in it; let the fields be jubilant, and everything in them. Then all the trees of the forest will sing for joy; they will sing before the Lord." (Psalm 96:11-13)

"Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise him in the heights above. Praise him, all his angels, praise him, all his heavenly hosts. Praise him, sun and moon, praise him, all you shining stars. Praise him, you highest heavens and you waters above the skies. Let them praise the name of the Lord, for he commanded and they were created. He set them in place for ever and ever; he gave a decree that will never pass away." (Psalm 148:1-6)

"Praise the Lord from the earth, you great sea creatures and all ocean depths, lightning and hail, snow and clouds, stormy winds that do his bidding, you mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars, wild animals and all cattle, small creatures and flying birds." (Psalm 148:7-10)

"You will go out in joy and be led forth in peace; the mountains and hills will burst into song before you, and all the trees of the field will clap their hands." (Isaiah 55:12)

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"The earth is the LORD's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein."
(Psalm 24:1, KJV)