



Jewish environmental ethics are derived from the sacred texts the Torah and the Talmud, as well as significant individuals in Jewish history. Jewish ethical teachings regarding the environment have only in recent times been focused upon heavily. This is because of modern environmental issues such as deforestation and global warming.

Jews are taught that they are steward over the created world. This stems from the creation stories in Bereshith, where G-d created the man and woman and put them in the garden of Eden to care for G-d's creation. Humans are instructed to "til and keep it." However, in Deuterium 10:19-20 Jews are instructed to "have dominion over" the created world. This has led to some <sup>Jew</sup> viewing the ~~entire~~ environment as property of humans, thus ~~to~~ resulting in the exploitation of natural resources. Jews have a covenant with G-d, and thus have the responsibility ~~to~~ of stewardship.



Jews in Deravim are taught about the wrong involved in the needless destruction of the environment.

"You must not cut the trees down, but you may take fruit from them." Although this is in the context of warfare, the ethical teaching ~~is~~ is that the environment is for human use, but not exploitation. The anthropocentric view is very much challenged, as ~~the~~ Jews must be stewards, as they are only one aspect of creation.

~~the~~ The Talmudic principle of Bal Taskcht links to the quote in the Torah about the "cutting of trees." ~~the~~ Bal Taskcht is the principle about the wrong involved in the needless destruction of the environment. As Jews have a covenant with G-d, they must be stewards ~~of the~~ G-d's creation. ~~that~~ Needless destruction results in escalating environmental issues, and a ~~destruction~~ destruction of the natural environment and natural resources.



The Talmud also teaches against the wrong involved with greed and selfishness. As it is greed and ~~stare~~ that results in exploitation of G-d's created world, and selfishness that leads to Jews not being stewards of the earth.

"Who is rich? One who is happy with his portion" (Pirkei.) This confirms that excess accumulation of material possessions and wealth can lead to selfishness, ~~and the~~ <sup>and the</sup> exploitation of the environment.

Moses Maimonides, a key Jewish rabbi, teacher, ~~and~~ Talmudist and philosopher in the middle Ages ~~was~~ wrote about environmental ethics in his book "The Guide for the ~~Perplexed~~ Perplexed." This piece of writing, which is intended for students, is an exploration of key issues affecting Jews. "Everything was created for their own sake and not for the sake of someone else." This reaffirms



ethical teachings in the Torah, ~~or~~ Maimonides develops the idea ~~that~~ that the environment should not be exploited because it has its own ~~per se~~ purpose. Thus the environment is not at the disposal and exploitation for humans. Again, this challenges the anthropocentric view of human in creation.

The Jewish environmental groups internationally and in Australia have put these ~~ethics~~ ethics into practise. Through research, and education a halachic perspective on ~~the~~ environmental ethics is possible for Jews world wide. The Jewish National Fund based in Israel ~~is~~ has a project at the moment planting trees in Israel. This aims to combat deforestation. Jews can become involved through donations for example.

Another <sup>Jewish</sup> environmental group, which is based <sup>Melbourne</sup> in Australia is ~~the~~ B'nai B'rith. They provide education to Jewish Australians of how to be



stewards of earth ~~with~~ in modern times with a Halachic perspective. For example, they assist Jews ~~with~~ with the use of low energy appliances and provide tips with how to live environmentally friendly day to day.

In conclusion, Jewish ethical teaching on the environment ~~is the~~ is the main teaching that Jews need to be stewards over the <sup>and</sup> Creation.

Jews covenant with G-d reaffirms their responsibility.