

Bite Size Bible Study

Care of the Earth #145 By Pastor Lee

Everywhere you turn today, whether it is TV, Internet, social networks or the workplace, you hear the cry to reduce the greenhouse gasses and other pollutants.

But until the last decade it was not even on the radar for most people and especially companies that have caused much of this and other pollutions. Even today these same entities are only talking of modifying their practices to approach “zero emissions”, by decades into the future. A Laudable Goal, but that doesn’t address the pollution already in the atmosphere, the so called “legacy load”. Even if everyone were to get to “zero emissions” tomorrow, we would still see drastic abnormal weather conditions, melting polar ice caps and ecosystems turned upside down. We the “caretakers” of this earth have let it get totally out of balance, partly through ignorance, partly through greed, and partly through the idea of “let someone else take care of it”.

But greenhouse gasses are only one of the things we are not handling properly. Our farms, ranches, cities, wetlands, marshes, wild animals, open spaces, and the list continues ad nauseam.

God created this world and set it in order for the use of humankind. His intent was for us to rule over it. That means to care for it and protect it; not to exploit it to extinction, but this exploitation is what we have been doing for millennium.

*God blessed them: God said to them, “Be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth and **subdue** it. Rule over the fish in the sea, the birds in the air and every living creature that crawls on the earth.” Then God said, “Here! Throughout the whole earth I am giving you as food every seed-bearing plant and every tree with seed-bearing fruit. And to every wild animal, bird in the air and creature crawling on the earth, in which there is a living soul, I am giving as food every kind of green plant.” And that is how it was. Gen 1:28-30 CJB*

*Be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth and **subdue** it. **Subdue** means: to overcome, quiet, to bring under control. To control the earth’s processes is to insure that each process is working the way it was designed. Creating and dumping pollutants is not the process God had intended when He placed the earth under the care of mankind.*

The earth is designed to handle waste through the process of decay and reuse of the materials. But this process cannot handle too much waste, in too small of a location. We have for too long expected “nature”

to take care of what ever we dump into our oceans and lakes, or what ever we allow to escape into our atmosphere. Added to this, we have been destroying the fertility of the land by constantly tilling and planting crops with no time for the land to fallow and rejuvenate the microbes in the soil. To attempt to get greater and greater yields we dump pesticides on the land and further destroy the soil and it’s inhabitants.

“For six years, you are to sow your land with seed and gather in its harvest. But the seventh year, you are to let it rest and lie fallow, so that the poor among your people can eat; and what they leave, the wild animals in the countryside can eat. Do the same with your vineyard and olive grove. Exodus 23:10-12 CJB

Six years you will sow your field; six years you will prune your grapevines and gather their produce. But in the seventh year is to be a Shabbat of complete rest for the land, a Shabbat for Adonai; you will neither sow your field nor prune your grapevines. You are not to harvest what grows by itself from the seeds left by your previous harvest, and you are not to gather the grapes of your untended vine; it is to be a year of complete rest for the land. Leviticus 25:3-5 CJB

God has given us instructions on how to care for His creation, but we have, for the most part, ignored this. Then in our arrogance we ask: “What will we eat in the seventh year if we do not plant or harvest our crops?” And God replies: *I will send you such a blessing in the sixth year that the land will yield enough for three years. Lev. 25:20-21 NIV*

God has loaned us a world that was in perfect balance, designed to support humankind. We have accepted rulership of this world and then redefined the concept of ruler to mean use it, abuse it; because I am the the “top dog”. It is the same thing that rulers of people often do.

We have ignored the owner of the planet and set up our own rules. If we had been the caretaker of a humans estate and acted this way we would be fired in a “New York Minute”.

But God is patient; He knows our proclivities and willing to let us learn from our mistakes. Fortunately we have a God who loves us and is willing to overlook our arrogance – for a time.

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