

Rosh Hashanah 5778 — September 22, 2017

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One generation goes, another comes, but the earth remains forever. (Ecclesiastes 1:4)

Genesis 1:1-5

¹ When God was about to create heaven and earth, ² the earth was chaos, unformed, and on the chaotic waters' face there was darkness. Then God's spirit glided over the face of the waters, ³ and God said, "Let there be light!" — and there was light. ⁴ And when God saw how good the light was, God divided the light from the darkness; ⁵ God then called the light Day, and called the darkness Night, and there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

Earthrise, captured by Apollo 8 Lunar Module Pilot William Anders on December 24, 1968. Image Credit: NASA



Genesis 1:27-28

²⁷ So God created the human beings in [the divine] image, creating [them] in the image of God, creating them male and female. ²⁸ God then blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and tame it; hold sway over the fish of the sea and the birds of the sky, and over every animal that creeps on the earth."

Genesis 2:15

²⁷ God placed the human in the Garden of Eden to work it and keep it.

Leviticus 25:23

²³ But the land must not be sold beyond reclaim, for the land is Mine; you are but strangers resident with Me.

How would you characterize our responsibility to the land as described in Torah?

Ecclesiastes Rabbah 7:13

Look at God's work — "Consider God's doing! Who can straighten what God has twisted?" (Ecclesiastes 7:13). When the Blessed Holy One created the first human, God led the human round all the trees of the Garden of Eden and said: "Look at My works, how beautiful and praiseworthy they are! And all that I have created, it was for you that I created it. Pay attention that you do not corrupt and destroy My world: if you corrupt it, there is no one to repair it after you."

What does the above *midrash* invite us to consider in preparing for the New Year?

