

Reading Scripture in an age of ecological disaster

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1. Problems

- 1.1 James Lovelock on climate change
- 1.2 James Lovelock on stewardship
(Cf. J. Lovelock, *The Revenge of Gaia: Why the Earth is Fighting Back - and How We Can Still Save Humanity* (London: Allen Lane, 2006).)
- 1.3 Other problems with stewardship

2. Human Dominion within Creation (in the Torah)

- 2.1 The right to use (Gen 1:26, 28; cf. Ps 8:6-8)
- 2.2 Ruling like God
- 2.3 Ruling fellow-creatures — hierarchy qualified by community
cf. Deut 17:14-20
- 2.4 Ruling within the order of creation — sharing the earth
cf. Gen 1:28-29
- 2.5 Enhancing creation (Gen 2:15)
- 2.6 Preserving creation (Gen 6-8)
- 2.7 Letting creation be — legislative limits on Israel's use of the land
Exod 20:10; 23:10-12; Lev 25; Deut 5:14; 22:6-7; 25:4
wild animals: Exod 23:11; Lev 25:7.

3. Humanity in the Community of Creation (in Job and Psalms)

— One Creature among Others

- 3.1 Putting us in our place (Job 38-39)
- 3.2 Living in a shared home (Ps 104)
- 3.3 All creation's praise of God
Pss 19:1-3; 69:34; 97; 98:7-9; 148; Isa 42:10-11; Phil 2:10; Rev 5:13
the 4 living creatures: Rev 4:6-8

4. Conclusions

The human dominion entails

- (1) recognizing that we have this exceptional power as one creature among others
- (2) using other creatures for human life and flourishing while respecting the order of creation and the right of other living beings also to life and flourishing
- (4) letting wild nature be as well as intervening in it, exercising the dominion in restraint as much as in active intervention
- (5) intervening to preserve as much as to change
- (6) enhancing as well as preserving.

Further reading:

R. Bauckham, Chapter 7 ('Human Authority in Creation') in R. Bauckham, *God and the Crisis of Freedom* (Louisville: WJK, 2002).

R. J. Berry ed., *Environmental Stewardship* (London/New York: T. & T. Clark, 2006).

R. Bauckham, 'Joining Creation's Praise of God,' *Ecotheology* 7 (2002) 45-59.