

# SUSTAINABILITY IN JUDAISM



## ***Sustainable Traditions In*** **HISTORY**

- Genesis 2:15 "God settled the Human in the garden of Eden, to till and tend it."
- Numbers 35:33 "You shall not pollute the land in which you live."
- Psalm 24:1 "The earth is the LORD's and all that it holds, the world and its inhabitants."
- The ancient Israelites recognized the land as ultimately belonging to God, so respected God and God's creatures by letting their fields lie fallow every seventh year to regain fertility, giving livestock rest, forbidding cutting down trees during sieges, and prohibiting killing both a mother bird and her fledglings.
- Mordechai Yosef Leiner, Abraham Joshua Heschel, and Samson Raphael Hirsch advocated for care of plants, animals, and natural resources.

- Sign petitions encouraging environmentally-friendly policies!
- Reduce backyard pesticide use.
- Encourage your workplace to implement resource-saving initiatives.
- Lessen AI use.
- When appliances break, replace with energy-efficient versions.
- Reduce car use. Carpool, bicycle, or use public transportation!
- Keep your old phone and other electronics. Technology uses lots of mining-intensive minerals.
- Use reusable versions of straws, water bottles, diapers, and napkins.
- Volunteer and donate.

## ***Sustainability*** **TODAY**

- Emphasis on creation care, stewardship, *tzedakah* (loving-kindness), and *bal tashchit* (avoiding wastefulness)
- Jewish environmental nonprofits: Adamah, the Coalition On The Environment and Jewish Life, Dayenu: A Jewish Call To Climate Action, Jewish Climate Action Network, and Center for Jewish Food Ethics
- Environmental advocates: Rabbi Arthur Waskow, Rabbi Lynn Gottlieb, Rabbi Yonatan Neril, Rabbi Ellen Bernstein, Rabbi Saul Berman, and Rabbi Leo Dee
- Books: *Waste Not: A Jewish Environmental Ethic*, *Eco Bible*, *Religion And Environment: The Case Of Judaism*, *The Sacred Earth*, *Kabbalah and Ecology*, and *To Forever Inhabit This Earth*
- Congregations are going solar with Interfaith Power & Light

## **DO YOUR PART!**

- Buy what you need and learn to repair what you have.
- Eat less meat. Try beans, peas, hummus, lentils, peanut butter, tofu, and meat alternatives instead!

This congregational resource was created as part of the Sustainability In Religion program by Conserve It Forward, a nonprofit organization focused on empowering everyday people through environmental education, and made by religious studies PhD student Avalon Jade Theisen in consultation with Jewish studies professor Dr. Adrienne Krone.

