

# AS THE EARTH RAGES

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By Jim  
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The earth is  
the LORD'S, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein. For  
he hath founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods.

Psalm 24:1-2

As the earth  
rages against her human tormentors, religious communities across the earth  
need, as perhaps never before, to bring to the public eye the moral components  
of the swelling issues surrounding human use and abuse of Mother Earth.

Yes, it&rsquo;s an  
immoral act to attack your own mother, yet that&rsquo;s what we&rsquo;ve done, utterly  
without mercy or intelligence. It&rsquo;s only profit that matters; forget decency,  
kindness, trust, love, justice, and almost every form of morality; it&rsquo;s only  
profit.

And where in  
history did we turn from a basic public morality to the outrageous arrogance  
that characterizes the major corporate destroyers of the earth? My thought is  
that this sharp break began with the Industrial Revolution several hundred  
years ago when vast improvements in transportation and communication made it  
possible for the first time to exercise the avarice and greed that were there  
all the time. Previous to this time, destruction of the earth didn&rsquo;t matter  
much because there were few people to be damaged and the earth had capacity to  
recover from our rapacious onslaughts.

As are many  
human problems, this one is also allied with religion and our ability to  
substitute our will and understanding for the intent of Almighty God. Early in

the Genesis account of creation, God gave Adam and his descendants permission to "have dominion" over the flora and fauna of the earth, and to be "fruitful and multiply, fill the earth and subdue it." So the terms dominion, multiply, and subdue became attached to human relationships with Mother Earth, and, as we now know, became the justification for mindless, uncontrolled destruction of whatever part of nature or the earth we needed to keep the industrial fires burning.

But if we kept the entire context of Scripture in mind, we would realize that God's permission to dominate and subdue is countered by his equally mandatory command concerning the Garden of Eden: that man was to "tend and keep it";

The earth and its treasures were intended for human use, but not human abuse. A bit of Native American wisdom might not be so bad, since it would include a profound respect for the motherhood of earth, and an equal veneration of its flora and fauna. That view is also found in Christian theology, but has been minimized by religious leaders in favor of increased attention to personal piety and relatively "safe" religious beliefs that make people feel good but do little to deal with pressing political, economic, social, and environmental problems.

I wonder how long we can continue to ignore both the rage of the earth against us, and the clear word of God that our greed, carelessness, and downright evil has created the impending disaster of an earth turned against its destroyers? This isn't just an unfortunate accident: it's a clear outcome of human hubris and steadfast refusal to hear anything God says about our wayward behavior as having something to do with it?

Consequences will, I think, change our minds, but only after much unnecessary suffering. It's the checkered history of Israel all over again: apostasy, suffering, repentance, reformation, renewal under new leadership, and back again to apostasy.

But this time it's different: God will not pass by us again. Never before have we had the potential to totally destroy the earth and its inhabitants---but now we do. Look at the partial list of such destroyers of life: nuclear weapons, germ warfare, drug resistant germs, global warming, drones and robotic weapons, international predatory corporations, crime, conventional warfare, internet breakdown, and the equally powerful but hidden threats of societal breakdown, rampant mental illness, and a population utterly bereft of decency, respect for others, and care for the earth.

It's time for America to "read the handwriting"

on the wall” and begin a national turning to God. Let it begin with us!