

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN MAN AND NATURE IN ZIONISM

BETWEEN LAND DEVELOPMENT AND ITS MAINTENANCE

- Man-to-Land – Individual Exercise on passages: Every student is given a reading passage to assist him in answering this question: What is the relationship between man and nature and - to the land?
- Sorting the passages – in groups: Divide the class into groups in a way that each group member becomes represents one of the passages. The group is assigned to sort the passages by the relationship between man and nature depicted in them. First – to be done freely, and then to be done by the following guiding questions:
 - What is man's role and what is his position towards nature and land?
 - Is man the master, the owner in control, or the guardian who services it?
 - Should man develop the land to serve the needs of man or should he preserve it as it is as much as possible?
- General Discussion:

Every group presents its categorization.

- According to what criteria were the divisions made? Which sections were easy to sort, and which were more difficult or confusing to sort?
- What are the two major positions you encountered? What is the main dilemma?
- Think about when (and in which circumstances) could such a dilemma come up? (founding a settlement in an open space, drying the Hula Swamps and preparing the land for inhabiting the Negev – an attempt to alter the nature of the desert, building production plants in open spaces).
- What is your position regarding the question – whether the land ought to be developed, changed and made suitable for needs, or - be preserved in its current state.

Suggested Division of the Passages:

Nature Preservation and Integration

- Gordon – "And you shall see the land and the cosmos within"
- Genesis – 2 – "to work it and to guard it"
- Kohelet Raba – "what you have damaged – there is no one who can mend them after you"
- The Song of the Grass – "it is very good to pray amongst them"
- Every grass says this – "All my life I attempted to refrain from picking them"
- Deuteronomy 20 - "You shall not destroy its trees"

Controlling Nature and Altering it

- Genesis 1 – "Conquer it and rule the fish of the sea"
- Genesis 2 – "And there is no man to work the land"
- Kohelet Raba – "What I had created – I created for you"
- Morning song – "We shall clothe you with a dress of concrete and cement"
- Waltz for Plant Protection – Nature Preservation Criticism, "The law excluded me from protection"

Read the Passage and Answer the Questions

And you shall look around on that day, man, see the earth and all the cosmos in it, and you shall see the heavens with all their hosts, with all the worlds that are in them, to an endless expanse. And there is no inquiry - and here they are all close to your soul, and here they are all giving it a blessing. Then, will you achieve the eternity that is in a moment. Then you will know, how great your wealth is, how great is the blessing that life carries to you.

(A. D. Gordon)

- What does man have to do in order to come closer to the universe and to nature?
- Which of the biblical texts (uttered by a Jewish leader) is mentioned here? Why is it mentioned? What does he add to it?
- What connection between man and nature does Gordon describe? Does man control nature or is he part of it?
- Does man have to change nature or to integrate with it?

Read the Passage and Answer the Questions

When G-d created Adam, he took him and led him to all of the trees in the Garden of Eden and told him: Look and see how my creations are fine and perfect. Well, all of what I had created, I created for you. Take heed not to ruin them and destroy my world, since if you ruin them, there is no one to mend them.

(Kohelet Raba Section 7)

- Who are the characters in the passage?
- What does G-d say to Adam and what is the main message of the passage?
- What is man's role according to this passage? What is the relationship between G-d and man?
- What connection between G-d and man is present in this passage? Is man the master and the owner of nature? Is he part of nature? Does man need to change nature or to integrate with it?



Read the Passage and Answer the Questions

Deuteronomy 20, 19

"When you lay siege to a city for many days, fighting against it to capture it, do not destroy its trees by putting an ax to them, because you can eat their fruit. Do not cut them down. Are the trees people, that you should besiege them?"

Rashi: Is man a tree to enter the siege in fear of you to be afflicted with sorrows of hunger and thirst as the people of the city, why must you destroy it?

- What is the situation described in the passage? What importance is the attitude towards nature even in such a situation?
- What is the main lesson gleaned from the passage according to Rashi's interpretation? What is the difference between tree and man?
- What connection between man and nature is exhibited in the passage? Is man in control and owner of nature? Is he part of nature? Does man need to change nature or to integrate with it?

Read the Passage and Answer the Questions

1. In which way is a shepherd likened to grass?
2. What is the role of the Land of Israel in the song? Is it something physical that needs to be dealt with as such, or is it a spiritual being?
3. What is the lesson of the song? What must man do?
4. What connection between man and nature is prevalent in the passage? Is man the master and owner of nature? Is he part of nature? Is man expected to change nature or to integrate in it?

The Song of the Grasses/

Naomi Shemer (Based on Rabbi Nachman of Breslau)

Know that every shepherd
Has his own tune.
Know that every grass
Has its own song,
And from the song of the grasses
The tune of a shepherd
Is made.

How beautiful, how beautiful and
pleasant
To hear their song.
It's very good to pray among them,
And serve Hashem with joy,
And from the song of the grasses
The heart is filled
And yearns.

And when the heart is filled with the
song,
And yearns for the Land of Israel,
A great light issues forth and goes,
From the holiness of the Land upon it,
And from the song of the grasses
The tune of the heart
Is made...



Read the Passage and Answer the Questions

Genesis Chapter 2

(5) When no bush of the field was yet in the land^[ב] and no small plant of the field had yet sprung up—for the LORD God had not caused it to rain on the land, and there was no man to work the ground;

(15) And God the Lord took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it.

- The passage describes a situation by which there is no vegetation, why is there no growth? What is the condition that brings growth? What does the Lord have to do and what does man have to do?
- What is the role of G-d and what is the role of man in regard to nature?
- What is the nature of the connection between man and nature? Is man in control and master of nature? Is he part of nature? Does man need to change nature or to integrate in it.

Read the Passage and Answer the Questions

Every Grass Says Something

After praying the 'big' (early) Minchah, the rabbi, Rabbi Kook, went out to stroll in the field, in order to concentrate. I accompanied him.

On the way I picked a plant or a flower.

The rabbi was shocked but told me calmly: "Believe me that in all my days I made it a point to refrain from picking any flower that is capable of growing or blooming unnecessarily, since there is no grass below that is missing a spiritual force from above that tells it to grow. Every blossom, every grass says something, every stone whispers a secret, every creature recites praises." The words that emerged from a pure and holy heart got engraved in my heart. From then I started feeling more acutely the attribute of mercy over every living thing.

Rabbi Aryeh Levine (Rabbi of the underground forces in the pre-State-of- Israel period)



Chagim Center

Home for the holidays

- Why did Rabbi Kook and Rabbi Levine go out to the field? What is located in the field and in nature that helps a person do something that is impossible to do indoors?
- What does Rabbi Levine do? How does Rabbi Kook respond? Why is he shocked?
- What is Rabbi Kook's argument, why is it forbidden to pick a flower? How should we relate to the environment according to this?
- What connection between man and nature is reflected in this passage? Does man control and is the owner of nature? Is he part of nature? Must man change nature or integrate with it?

Read the Passage and Answer the Questions

- According to the song, what is the attitude to animals and to plants and what is the attitude to people (to whom the song is directed)?
- In your opinion is the author satisfied with the situation or does she begrudge the idea that nature is being preserved yet she is not protected?
- What is the desirable situation according to the writer?
- What is the connection between man and nature in the passage? Is man the master and owner of nature? Is he part of nature? Does man have to change nature or to integrate in it? What is the actual situation (that usually occurs) what is the desirable situation concerning the relationship between man and nature according to the song?

Waltz for Plant Protection/Naomi Shemer

Daffodils are already blooming in nature reserves
Rugs unfold on the coastal plain
Anemone and crocus, a thousand shades and color
And the law that says - here is forbidden to pick!

Only me does the law fail to protect
Only I have no guards
If only I had sepal
My status would be different.

Rare birds are already sitting in a rock
Rare trees are preserved separately
Frightened deer gaze at the sign
In which it is explicitly stated that hunting is prohibited.

Only I have no sign that guards
Around me there is no fence
If I were, say, a deer
My situation would be different!

Sir, be careful, do not touch the Iris!
Colorful-mountains are off limits!
Every hill perked up on the city outskirts -
Is a wild reserve and a registered zone!

So I sometimes think
That it might have been better
If I were a narcissus or cyclamen
Or even a common squill

Look at what is happening to me on my way:
Everyone passes - a kidnapper - a picker - a foreigner
strikes
If I were an animal or a flower
My situation would differ!

Read the Passage and Answer the Questions

Genesis 1, 28

(28) And God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground.” 29 Then God said, “I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food.

Nachmanidies, Genesis 1, 28:

And rule it – He gave them power and sovereignty to do as they wish with animals and vermin and all reptiles creeping on the earth, and to build and to uproot, and to quarry copper from the mountains, etc. And this shall include all that is intended with the expression: "And in all of the land".

- In the passage G-d approaches Adam and Eve, what does he command them to do? what actions were they to carry out concerning animals and which – in connection with plants?
- What feeling do the words: "fill", "conquer", "rule", "lead" elicit? From which fields are these terms taken? What do they remind you of?
- How does Nachmanidies interpret the word, "conquer"? What does he add or emphasize?
- What type of connection between man and nature does the passage depict? Does man rule nature or is he part of it? Does man need to change nature or to integrate with it?



Read the Following Passage and Answer the Questions

Morning Song / Natan Alterman

In the mountains the sun is already hot
And in the valley the dew is still shining,
We love you, homeland,
With joy, song and hard work.

From the slopes of Lebanon to the Dead Sea
We'll tour you with plows,
We will plant and build for you,
We will beautify you greatly.

We'll dress you up in concrete and cement
And we'll spread out carpets of gardens,
On the soil of your redeemed fields
The grain shall ring joyous bells.

The desert, we shall dig through it,
The swamps, we shall dry
What more can we give to add to your glory and
satisfaction,
What else haven't we given that we should give?

In the mountains, in the mountains our light shone,
We ascend the mountain,
The yesterday - left behind us
But till tomorrow - the way is long.

If the path is difficult and betraying,
If even more than one falls dead,
Forever, we will love you, homeland,
We are for you - in battle and in toil!

- Who are the characters in the song? To whom is the song sung? Who sings the song?

- Is it an individual or is it a crowd?

The song was composed in 1934 in the era of the pioneers for a certified film of the Zionist Movement. What does the source of the song tell you about the identity of the singers and their intentions?

- How many verbs there are in the song? Why, in your opinion are there so many different verbs?

- What items connected to nature and vegetation are there in the song and which – are connected to man-made objects? Is there a separation or integration between nature and man's production?

- What is the attitude to Israel in the song? How do the people express their attitude to Israel?

- What connection exists between man and nature in the

passage? Is man the master and owner of nature? Is he part of nature? Does man need to change nature or to be integrated with it?





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And you shall look around on that day, man, see the earth and all the cosmos in it, and you shall see the heavens with all their hosts, with all the worlds that are in them, to an endless expanse.

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And when the heart is filled by the
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And yearns for Eretz Yisroel,
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(Kohelet Raba Section 7)

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Every hill perked up on the city outskirts -
Is a wild reserve and a registered zone!

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Or even a common squill

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