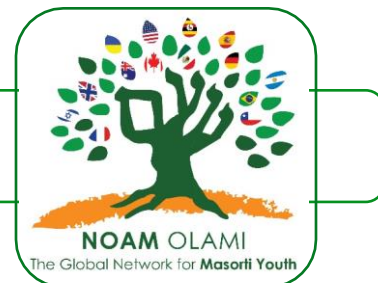


**Man/Woman vs. Earth - Equality or Hierarchy**

<p>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. <b>B'reshit (Genesis) 1:28</b></p>	<p>וַיְבָרֵךְ אֹתָם, אֱלֹהִים, וַיֹּאמֶר לָהֶם אֱלֹהִים פְּרוּ וּרְבוּ וּמְלֵאוּ אֶת-הָאָרֶץ, וּכְבֹּשֶׁהָ; וּרְדוּ בַדְגַת הַיָּם, וּבְעוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם, וּבְכָל-חַיָּה, הַרְמִשֵּׁת עַל-הָאָרֶץ. בְּרֵאשִׁית א, 28</p>
<p>And the Lord took Adam and placed him in the Garden of Eden, to work it and guard it. <b>Breshit (Genesis) 2:15</b></p>	<p>וַיִּקַּח יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים, אֶת-הָאָדָם; וַיִּנְחֵהוּ בְּגֶן-עֵדֶן, לְעִבְדָּהּ וּלְשָׁמְרָהּ. בְּרֵאשִׁית ב' 15.</p>
<p>See God's work, for who can straighten out what He made crooked? Kohelet 7:13.</p> <p>Upon creating the first human beings, God guided them around the Garden of Eden, saying; 'Look at my creations! See how beautiful and perfect they are! I created everything for you. Make sure you don't ruin or destroy My world. If you do, there will be no one after you to fix it.' <b>Midrash Kohelet (Ecclesiastes) Rabbah 7:20</b></p>	<p>רְאֵה, אֶת-מַעֲשֵׂה הָאֱלֹהִים: כִּי מִי יוּכַל לְתַקֵּן, אֶת אֲשֶׁר עָוְתוּ. קהלת ז', 13.</p> <p>שעה שברא הקדוש ברוך הוא את אדם הראשון, נטלו והחזירו על כל אילני גן עדן, <b>ואמר לו</b>: ראה מעשי כמה נאים ומשובחין הן, וכל מה שבראתי, בשבילך בראתי, תן דעתך שלא תקלקל ותחריב את עולמי, שאם קלקלת אין מי שיתקן אחריך. מדרש רבה, קבלת, ז, א.</p>
<p>When in your war against a city you have to besiege it for a long time in order to capture it, you must not destroy its fruit trees, wielding an ax against them. You may eat of them, but you must not cut them down. Are the trees of the city human that it should enter the siege before you? Only trees that you know do not yield food may be destroyed; you may cut them down for constructing siege works against the city that is waging war on you, until it has been captured. <b>Devarim (Deuteronomy) 20:19-20</b></p>	<p>כִּי-תִצּוֹר אֶל-עִיר זְמִים רַבִּים לְהִלָּחֵם עָלֶיהָ לְתַפְּשָׁהּ, לֹא-תִשְׁחִית אֶת-עֵצֶה לְנֹדַח עָלֶיהָ גֵרְזֵן--כִּי מִמֶּנּוּ תֹאכַל, וְאֵתוּ לֹא תִכְרֹת: כִּי הָאָדָם עֵץ הַשָּׂדֶה, לְבָא מִפְּנֵיךְ בְּמִצּוֹר. <b>כ</b> רַק עֵץ אֲשֶׁר-תִּדְעַ, כִּי-לֹא-עֵץ מֵאֲכָל הוּא--אֵתוּ תִשְׁחִית, וְכָרְתָּ; וּבְנִיתָ מִצּוֹר, עַל-הָעִיר אֲשֶׁר-הוּא עֹשֶׂה עִמָּךְ מִלְחָמָה--עַד רִדְתָּהּ. דְּבָרִים כ', 19-20.</p>
<p>And this law does not only apply to trees. Whoever breaks vessels, rips up garments, destroys a building, stops up a fountain, or ruins food is guilty of violating the prohibition of Bal Tashchit. <b>Rambam (Maimonides), Mishnah Torah, Laws of Kings and Wars 6:10</b></p>	<p>ולא האילנות בלבד, אלא כל המשבר כלים, וקורע בגדים, והורס בניין, וסותם מעיין, ומאבד מאכלות דרך השחתה--עובר ב"לא תשחית". רמב"ם, משנה תורה, הלכות מלכים ומלחמות ו', 10.</p>



This session deals with the relationship between man and earth in a Jewish point of view. There is no question about the Halacha being earth friendly. There are endless examples for Mitzvas and rules that are intended to protect the environment, for example, the Shmita laws giving the land a sabbatical to recuperate. The question raised in this session, is what is the reason behind the Jewish laws of protecting the earth? Is it because god created it for the use of the man and we shall take care of it because of our interest of using it and enjoying it, or should we take care of it because god created earth as he created man, we are equal and we are not permitted to harm god's creation.

**כי לא המטיר ה' אלהים על הארץ. בראשית ב', 5.**  
שלושה דברים שקולין זה כזה, ואלו הן: ארץ; ואדם; ומטר... ושלושתן מגי' אותיות, ללמדך שאם אין ארץ אין מטר, ואם אין מטר אין ארץ, ואם אין שניהם אין אדם:

For God had not sent rain upon the earth **B'reshit (Genesis) 2:5**

### **Breshit (Genesis) Rabbah 13:3**

Three things are of equal importance: earth, humans, and rain...each word [in Hebrew] has three letters to teach us that without earth, there is no rain, and without rain, the earth cannot endure, and without either, humanity cannot exist.

דור הלך ודור בא, והארץ לעולם עמדת. קהלת א' 4.

### **Kohelet (Ecclesiastes) 1:4**

One generation goes and another generation comes; but the earth remains forever.