

# Is God Green and is He an Animal Rights Activist?

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I'm not tree hugger or PETA fanatic, but I DO believe wholeheartedly in respecting and caring for the environment and animals. After all, it is clear man's original purpose (Besides bringing glory to God: Rev. 4:11) was to protect and care for the environment and look after the animals.

**Gen. 2:5-9, 15, 19-20 And every plant of the field before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew: for the LORD God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was not a man to till the ground. But there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground. And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul. And the LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground made the LORD God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil... And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it... And out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof. And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found an help meet for him.**

Even though prior to the Fall there was no environmental hazards and all life was at that time vegan, the Scriptures tells us that man still had to “till” (v.5) “dress” and “keep” (v.15) the Garden.

The words “till” is “avad” in Hebrew and is related to the Hebrew word that means servant or slave, and so “avad” means to be made to serve, to work, till and plow. It also carries the connotation of working till fatigued.

The word “dress” in v. 15 is the same as the word “till” in v. 5. “Shamar” is the Hebrew word for “keep” in v. 15 and it means to guard, to protect and to preserve. It also means to obey and carry out and is the same word in Duet. 11:22 urging us

to, “diligently keep all these commandments which I command you, to do them,” referring to the Torah, the Law.

We were called to tame, domesticate and prune vegetation for the purpose of food cultivation and consumption. We were created with “green thumbs,” created to be gardeners, vinedressers, and farmers.

Prior to the Fall there was no death so it is assumed the vegetation that was consumed by man and beast was converted into energy and was 100% utilized and thus no fecal or urinal waste, which is a form of death. This coincides with the first law of thermodynamics which states that energy cannot be created or destroyed; rather, the amount of energy lost in a steady state process cannot be greater than the amount of energy gained. In other words when one thing converts from one form of energy to another “death” does not occur, only a change, morphing or transformation.

I am all for going green as much as possible and for one to reduce, reuse, recycle and recover when it is within their power to do so. However, the so-called science behind global warming and such necessitates serious scrutiny to establish validity and scientific accuracy. There is some bad science, propaganda and unnecessary fearmongering going on in this arena. That is another discussion for another time. My point in this article is that God has created us to be environmentalists.

As a Torah Obedient Natsari Jew I believe in not generating waste if one can help it. Regarding food, what I don't consume becomes animal feed or compost. Regarding packaging and other material items they are either recycled or reused. Old newsprint becomes wrapping paper, packing material or kindling for camp fires. Tin cans are recycled or used as pencil holders. Old clothes get new lives as cleaning rags, etc., etc.

After the Fall, death occurred and though everyone was still predominately vegan, animals were sacrificed and bone, skin and sinew were utilized for tools and clothes.

**Gen. 4:4 And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering:**

**Gen. 3:21 Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them.**

After the flood it was divinely permissible to consume animal flesh, what was (implied) deemed clean or “kosher” by God.

**Gen. 9:3-4 Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things. But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat.**

The command of Gen. 9:4 is reiterated in Lev. 17:10. The laws and traditions regarding the slaughter of clean animals for sacrifice and consumption are extensive. Many would think this is barbaric but actually, kosher slaughter, when done correctly is the most humane way of slaughter. With such an animal virtually every part of the animal that can be utilized, is. Meat for food, skin for garments, bags and tents, organs converted to bow string and thread, the refuse used for fuel, bone used for tools. And so many necessary and needful things are fabricated from some of the sacrificial and slaughtered animals for purpose of human consumption and thus almost not waste occurs.

Kosher slaughter, coupling Scripture with Talmud required the animal be calmed and consoled prior to slaughter and that when the slaughter takes place, a razor sharp blade with a one swift killing stroke is from jugular to jugular and the rush of blood causes the animal to pass out as if it were drifting off to sleep and because the blade is so sharp the animal feel minimal pain. I fully realize this seems very oxymoronic to the PETA crowd.

However, we must keep in mind that pagans use to boil living animals in their own mothers milk and the death shriek of the poor animal was seen as spiritual power that could be absorbed by the one sacrificing. This is cruel and strictly forbidden in Torah.

**Ex. 23:19 and 34:26 The first of the firstfruits of thy land thou shalt bring into the house of the LORD thy God. Thou shalt not seethe a kid in his mother's milk.**

**Deut. 14:21 Ye shall not eat of anything that dieth of itself: thou shalt give it unto the stranger that is in thy gates, that he may eat it; or thou mayest sell it unto an alien: for thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God. Thou shalt not seethe a kid in his mother's milk.**

Some would take an animal from the flock or herd and hack off pieces of it to eat while the animal was still alive so it would suffer and thus the creature would have a lingering, painful death over a period of days. This too is strictly forbidden by Torah:

**Deut. 12:23 Only be sure that thou eat not the blood: for the blood is the life; and thou mayest not eat the life with the flesh.**

The Laws of Torah also deem that babies of an animal are not to be slaughtered or taken in front of their mother. The animal mother's feelings are important and taken into consideration by God.

Despite the nay-saying of vegetarian and animal activists extremist, Jewish ethics regarding the treatment of animals is, I dare say, the best in the world, on par with the Native American philosophy regarding the treatment of animals, who they call their "little brothers and sisters."

In the Sefer HaMitzvot by the Rambam it says:

“Negative Commandment 101

Not to slaughter a female animal and her offspring on the same day

**Leviticus 22:28 "You shall not slaughter it and its young on the same day"**

There are many suspected reasons for this mitzvah, because the Torah doesn't flat out tell us why we are to act in such a manner toward cattle, however, allow me to speak from a second hand story from a once good friend in which he relates that "Spunky," a young calf who saw his mother slaughtered before its eyes, and afterwards Spunky began to become hostile and aggressive and he too had to be put down before his time.

I think we can reasonably conclude that the witnessed slaughter of his mother before his eyes may have caused this calf to become mean. Whether we want to admit it or not, animals such as cattle are intelligent and have feelings. They get scared and mad, so why wouldn't they hold a grudge. I have heard of circus elephants that do.

It doesn't specifically say in the Torah to separate them when slaughtering, but this is usually the practice done. If a prisoner of war and your whole family caught by a tyrannical regime, would you wish to see your family executed before your eyes? Regardless, it would make you sad and angry, true, but it would be less traumatic if you didn't have to see them murdered before your very eyes. It is not to far different than with animals.

By this act my friend could have unwittingly been responsible for an animal who gores.

**Exd 21:28-29 "If an ox gores a man or a woman to death, the ox shall surely be stoned and its flesh shall not be eaten; but the owner of the ox shall go unpunished. If, however, an**

**ox was previously in the habit of goring and its owner has been warned, yet he does not confine it and it kills a man or a woman, the ox shall be stoned and its owner also shall be put to death.**

Other reasons why not to slaughter a mother and her calf on the same day is so as not to kill two generations in a single day, to control ones appetite for meat.

It is clear to me that some animals have a conscious, sentience and feelings (to what species and to what degree is debatable) and should not be abused in anyway, especially if they are used to aid man and or protect man. Take the story of Balaam for example where God gives the donkey the gift of speech.

**Num. 22:22-31 And God's anger was kindled because he went: and the angel of the LORD stood in the way for an adversary against him. Now he was riding upon his ass, and his two servants were with him. And the ass saw the angel of the LORD standing in the way, and his sword drawn in his hand: and the ass turned aside out of the way, and went into the field: and Balaam smote the ass, to turn her into the way. But the angel of the LORD stood in a path of the vineyards, a wall being on this side, and a wall on that side. And when the ass saw the angel of the LORD, she thrust herself unto the wall, and crushed Balaam's foot against the wall: and he smote her again. And the angel of the LORD went further, and stood in a narrow place, where was no way to turn either to the right hand or to the left. And when the ass saw the angel of the LORD, she fell down under Balaam: and Balaam's anger was kindled, and he smote the ass with a staff. And the LORD opened the mouth of the ass, and she said unto Balaam, What have I done unto thee, that thou hast smitten me these three times? And Balaam said unto the ass, Because thou hast mocked me: I would there were a sword in mine hand, for now would I kill thee. And the ass said unto Balaam, Am not I thine ass, upon which thou hast ridden ever since I was thine unto this day? was I ever wont to do so unto thee? and he said, Nay. Then the LORD opened the eyes of Balaam, and he saw the angel of the LORD standing in the way, and his sword drawn in his hand: and he bowed down his head, and fell flat on his face.**

Even the Sabbath may be compromised to save the life of an animal.

**Matt. 12:11-12 And he said unto them, What man shall there be among you, that shall have one sheep, and if it fall into a pit on the sabbath day, will he not lay hold on it, and lift it out? How much then is a man better than a sheep? Wherefore it is lawful to do well on the sabbath days.**

We plainly see that God and the Torah promotes animal rights, albeit not to PETA's standards. For as we already discussed God and Torah allow for the consumption without waste of clean animals and the killing of an animal if a human life is in danger. Remember David killed lions and bears to protect himself and his flock?

**I Sam. 17:34-37 And David said unto Saul, Thy servant kept his father's sheep, and there came a lion, and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock: And I went out after him, and smote him, and delivered it out of his mouth: and when he arose against me, I caught him by his beard, and smote him, and slew him. Thy servant slew both the lion and the bear: and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them, seeing he hath defied the armies of the living God. David said moreover, The LORD that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine. And Saul said unto David, Go, and the LORD be with thee.**

So is being an environmentalist and an animal rights activism Scriptural, is God “green” and an animal rights activist? You bet!