

Possibly Relevant Biblical Texts

Gen. 1:1-31 (from the Priestly creation story)

[1] In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. [2] Now the earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep; and the Spirit of God hovered over the face of the waters.

[3] And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. [4] And God saw that light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. [5] God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, one day.

[6] And God said, "Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters." [7] And God made the firmament and separated the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament. And it was so. [8] And God called the firmament Heaven. And there was evening and there was morning, a second day.

[9] And God said, "Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear." And it was so. [10] God called the dry land Earth and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas. And God saw that it was good. [11] And God said, "Let the earth put forth vegetation, plants yielding seed, and fruit trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind, upon the earth." And it was so. [12] The earth brought forth vegetation, plants yielding seed according to their own kinds, and trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. [13] And there was evening and there was morning, a third day.

[14] And God said, "Let there be lights in the firmament of the heavens to separate the day from the night; and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years, [15] and let them be lights in the firmament of the heavens to give light upon the earth." And it was so. [16] And God made the two great lights, the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night; he made the stars also. [17] And God set them in the firmament of the heavens to give light upon the earth, [18] to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. [19] And there was evening and there was morning, a fourth day.

[20] And God said, "Let the waters bring forth swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the firmament of the heavens." [21] So god created the great sea monsters and every living creature that moves, with which the waters swarm, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. [22] And God blessed them, saying, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth." [23] And there was evening and there was morning, a fifth day.

[24] And God said, "Let the earth bring forth living creatures according to their kinds: cattle and creeping things and beasts of the earth according to their kinds." And it was so. [25] And God made the beasts of the earth according to their kinds and the cattle according to their kinds, and everything that creeps upon the ground according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.

[26] Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth." [27] So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. [28] And God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth." [29] And God said, "Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food. [30] And to every beast of the earth, and to every bird of the air, and to everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food." And it was so. [31] And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, a sixth day.

Gen. 2: 8, 15, 18-23 (from the Yahwistic creation story)

[8] And the Lord God planted a garden in Eden in the east...

[15] And the Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it. [...]

[18] Then the Lord God said, 'It is not good that the man should be alone. I will make him a helper fit for him.' [19] So out of the ground Yahweh God fashioned all the wild beasts and all the birds of heaven. These he brought to the man to see what he would call them; each one was to bear the name the man would give it. [20] The man gave names to all the cattle, all the birds of heaven and all the wild beasts. But no helpmate suitable for man was found for him. [21] So Yahweh God made the man fall into a deep sleep. And while he slept, he took one of his ribs and enclosed it in flesh. [22] Yahweh God built the rib he had taken from the man into a woman, and brought her to the man."

Gen. 9: 1-17

[1] And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth. [2] The fear of you and dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every bird of the air, upon everything that creeps on the ground and all the fish of the sea; into your hand they are delivered. [3] Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you; and as I give you the green plants, I give you everything. [4] Only you shall not eat flesh with its life, that is, its blood. [5] For your lifeblood I will surely require a reckoning; of every beast I will require it and of man; of every man’s brother I will require the life of man. [6] Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed; for God made man in his own image. [7] And you, be fruitful and multiply, bring forth abundantly on the earth and multiply in it.”

[8] Then God said to Noah and his sons with him, [9] “Behold, I establish my covenant with you and your descendants after you, [10] and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the cattle, and every beast of the earth with you, as many as came out of the ark. [11] I establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of a flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth.” [12] And God said, “This is the sign of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations: [13] I set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. [14] When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow is seen in the clouds, [15] I will remember my covenant which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh. [16] When the bow is in the clouds, I will look upon it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth.” [17] God said to Noah, “This is the sign of the covenant which I have established between me and all flesh that is upon the earth.”

Exodus 19: 5

[5] The whole earth is mine.

Exodus 20: 8-11 (4th Commandment)

[8] Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. [9] Six days you shall labor, and do all your work; [10] but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God; in it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your manservant, or your maidservant, or your cattle, or the sojourner who is within your gates; [11] for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day; therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.

Exodus 23:10-12

[10] “For six years you shall sow your land and gather in its yield; [11] but the seventh year you shall let it rest and lie fallow, that the poor of your people may eat; and what they leave the wild beasts may eat. You shall do likewise with your vineyard, and with your olive orchard. [12] Six days you shall do your work, but on the seventh day you shall rest; that your ox and your ass may have rest, and the son of your bondmaid, and the alien, may be refreshed.”

Leviticus 19: 9-20

[9] When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap all the way to the edges of your field, or gather the gleanings after your harvest. [10] And you shall not strip your vineyard bare, neither shall you gather the fallen grapes of your vineyard; you shall leave them for the poor and the sojourner.

Leviticus 22: 28

[28] And whether the mother is a cow or a ewe, you shall not kill both her and her young in one day.

Leviticus 25: 2-7, 23

[2] ...the land shall observe a Sabbath for the Lord. Six years you shall sow your field ... [4] but in the seventh year there shall be a Sabbath of complete rest for the land.... [5] ... it shall be a year of solemn rest for the land. ... [23] The land shall not be sold in perpetuity, for the land is mine; for you are strangers and sojourners with me.

Deuteronomy 20: 19-20

If you besiege a town . . . you must not destroy its trees by wielding an ax against them....

Deuteronomy 22: 6-7, 10

[6] If you chance to come upon a bird’s nest, in any tree or on the ground, with young ones or eggs and the mother sitting upon the young or upon the eggs, you shall not take the mother with the young; [7] you shall let the mother go, but the young you may take to yourself; that it may go well with you, and that you may live long. [...] [10] You shall not plow with an ox and a donkey yoked together.

Deuteronomy 25: 4

[4] You shall not muzzle an ox when it is treading out the corn. [1 Cor 9:9–10: For it is written in the law of Moses, “You shall not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain.” Is it for oxen that God is concerned? Or does he not speak entirely for our sake? It was indeed written for our sake, for whoever plows should plow in hope and whoever threshes should thresh in hope of a share in the crop.]

II Samuel 12: 3

[3] The poor man had nothing save one little ewe lamb, which he had bought and nourished up; and it grew up together with him, and with his children; it did eat of his own morsel, and drank of his own cup, and lay in his bosom, and was to him as a daughter.

Psalms 8

[3] When I look at thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars which thou hast established; [4] what is man that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man that thou dost care for him? [5] Yet thou hast made him little less than God, and dost crown him with glory and honor. [6] Thou hast given him dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet, [7] all sheep and oxen, and also the beasts of the field, [8] the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea, whatever passes along the paths of the sea.

Psalms 24: 1-2

The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it, the world, and those who live in it; ...

Psalms 104

[This Psalm is thought to be written before *Genesis* 1.] The glories of creation.

[16] The trees of the LORD are watered abundantly, the cedars of Lebanon which he planted. [17] In them the birds build their nests; the stork has her home in the fir trees. [18] The high mountains are for the wild goats; the rocks are a refuge for the badgers.

Psalms 148: 7-13

Praise the Lord from the earth, ... fire and hail, snow and frost, stormy wind fulfilling his command! Mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars! Wild animals and all cattle, creeping things and flying birds! ... Let them praise the name of the Lord.

Proverbs 12: 10

A righteous man has regard for the life of his beast, but the mercy of the wicked is cruel.

Isaiah 11: 1, 6-9

[1] There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. [...]

[6] The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. [7] The cow and the bear shall feed; their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. [8] The sucking child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder's den. [9] They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.

Isaiah 24: 4-5

[4] The earth mourns and withers, the world languishes and withers; the heavens languish together with the earth. [5] The earth lies polluted under its inhabitants; for they have transgressed the laws, violated the statutes, broken the everlasting covenant.

Isaiah 45: 18

For thus says the Lord, who created the heavens (he is God!), who formed the earth and made it (he established it; he did not create it a chaos, he formed it to be inhabited!): “I am the Lord, and there is no other.”

Jeremiah 12: 4-5

[4] How long will the land lie parched and the grass in every field be withered? Because those who live in it are wicked, the animals and birds have perished. Moreover, the people are saying, “He will not see what happens to us.”

[God's Answer]

[5] "If you have raced with men on foot and they have worn you out, how can you compete with horses? If you stumble in safe country, how will you manage in the thickets by the Jordan? [6] Your brothers, your own family — even they have betrayed you; they have raised a loud cry against you. ^[LXX]Do not trust them, ^[LXX]though they speak well of you. [7] "I will forsake my house, abandon my inheritance; I will give the one I love into the hands of her enemies. [8] My inheritance has become to me like a lion in the forest. She roars at me; therefore I hate her. [9] Has not my inheritance become to me like a speckled bird of prey that other birds of prey surround and attack? Go and gather all the wild beasts; bring them to devour. [10] Many shepherds will ruin my vineyard and trample down my field; they will turn my pleasant field into a desolate wasteland. [11] It will be made a wasteland, parched and desolate before me; the whole land will be laid waste because there is no one who cares. [12] Over all the barren heights in the desert destroyers will swarm, for the sword of the LORD will devour from one end of the land to the other; no one will be safe. [13] They will sow wheat but reap thorns; they will wear themselves out but gain nothing. So bear the shame of your harvest because of the Lord's fierce anger."

Ezekiel 34: 18, 25-28

[18] Is it not enough for you to feed on the good pasture, that you must tread down with your feet the rest of your pasture; and to drink of clear water, that you must foul the rest with your feet? [...]

[25] "I will make with them a covenant of peace and banish wild beasts from the land, so that they may dwell securely in the wilderness and sleep in the woods. [26] And I will make them and the places round about my hill a blessing; and I will send down the showers in their season; they shall be showers of blessing. [27] And the trees of the field shall yield their fruit, and the earth shall yield its increase, and they shall be secure in their land; and they shall know that I am the LORD, when I break the bars of their yoke, and deliver them from the hand of those who enslaved them. [28] They shall no more be a prey to the nations, nor shall the beasts of the land devour them; they shall dwell securely, and none shall make them afraid.

Joel 2: 21

Do not fear, O soil; be glad and rejoice, for the Lord has done great things! Do not fear, you animals of the field, for the pastures of the wilderness are green...

Jonah 4: 9-11

[9] But God said to Jonah, "Do you do well to be angry for the plant?" And he said, "I do well to be angry, angry enough to die." [10] And the LORD said, "You pity the plant, for which you did not labor, nor did you make it grow, which came into being in a night, and perished in a night. [11] And should not I pity Nin'evah, that great city, in which there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand persons who do not know their right hand from their left, and also much cattle?"

Wisdom of Solomon 11: 24-12: 1 (from the Apocrypha)

[24] For thou lovest all things that exist, and hast loathing for none of the things which thou hast made, for thou wouldst not have made anything if thou hadst hated it. [25] How would anything have endured if thou hadst not willed it? Or how would anything not called forth by thee have been preserved? [26] Thou sparest all things, for they are thine, O Lord who lovest the living.

[1] For thy immortal spirit is in all things.

Sirach 42: 15-25 & 43 (from the Apocrypha)

The works of God in creation.

Colossians 1: 20

[20] and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.

John 3: 16-17

[16] For God so loved the world [*kosmos*] that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. [17] For God sent the Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him.

Romans 8: 18-25

[21] Because the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and obtain the glorious liberty of the children of God.