

Love the Earth

Love all God's creation, the whole and every grain of sand in it. Love every leaf, every ray of God's light. Love the animals, love the plants, love everything.

Fyodor Dostoyevsky (1821-1881), Russian author

Some people, in order to discover God, read books. But there is a great book: the very appearance of created things. Look above you! Look below you! Read it. God, whom you want to discover, never wrote that book with ink. Instead, He set before your eyes the things that He had made. Can you ask for a louder voice than that?

St. Augustine, (354-430 A.D.), bishop, founder of Western Christianity

Heaven is under our feet, as well as over our heads.

Henry David Thoreau (1817-1862), poet, naturalist

O Lord, how manifold are Thy works! In wisdom hast Thou made them all: the earth is full of Thy riches.

Psalm 104:24

How all-encompassing are the wonders of His boundless grace! Behold how they have pervaded the whole of creation. Such is their virtue that not a single atom in the entire universe can be found which doth not declare the evidences of His might, which doth not glorify His holy Name .

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Baha'i Gleanings from the Writings of Baha'u'llah, p. 62

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“Take good care of it”

And 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 fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth."

Genesis 1:26-29

And God saw everything He had made, and found it very good. And He said: "This is a beautiful world that I have given you. Take good care of it, do not ruin it."

Judaism: from the Ecclesiastes Rabbah

When I consider Thy heavens, the work of Thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which Thou hast ordained; What is man, that Thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that Thou visitest him? For Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of Thy hands; Thou hast put all things under his feet: All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; the fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas.

Psalm 8:3-9

Do ye not see that God has subjected to your use all things in the heavens and on earth, and has made his bounties flow to you in exceeding measure, both seen and unseen?

Islam : The Qur'an 31:20

. . . God hath ordained every good thing, whether created in the heavens or in the earth, for such of His servants as truly believe in Him. ... Render thanks and praise unto Him, and be of them that are truly thankful.

Baha'i: Gleanings from the Writings of Baha'u'llah, p. 276

We abuse land because we regard it as a commodity belonging to us. When we see land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect.

Aldo Leopold (1887-1948), environmentalist

The earth does not belong to man; man belongs to the earth.

Chief Seattle (1780-1866), Suquamish chief

Every man of discernment, while walking upon the earth, feeleth indeed abashed, inasmuch as he is fully aware that the thing which is the source of his prosperity, his wealth, his might, his exaltation, his advancement and power is, as ordained by God, the very earth which is trodden beneath the feet of all men. There can be no doubt that whoever is cognizant of this truth is cleansed and sanctified from all pride, arrogance, and vainglory.

Baha'i: Baha'u'llah, Epistle to the Son of the Wolf, p. 44

Earth provides enough to satisfy every man's need, but not for every man's greed.

Mahatma Gandhi (1869-1948)

Man makes war on the peaceful forests, and each day the shadows of the mountains retreat. Nothing will remain for us of the mystic refuges where we could garner thought and love.

Victor Richard de Laprade (1812-1883), French poet

. . . [N]o matter how much material civilization advances, it cannot attain to perfection except through the uplift of spiritual civilization.

Baha'i: Abdu'l-Baha, The Promulgation of Universal Peace, p. 12

Members of the human race! ... The civilization, so often vaunted by the learned exponents of arts and sciences, will, if allowed to overleap the bounds of moderation, bring great evil upon men. Thus warneth you He Who is the All-Knowing. If carried to excess, civilization will prove as prolific a source of evil as it had been of goodness when kept within the restraints of moderation.

Baha'i: Gleanings from the Writings of Baha'u'llah, pp. 342-343

. . . [U]ntil material achievements, physical accomplishments and human virtues are reinforced by spiritual perfections, luminous qualities and characteristics of mercy, no fruit or result shall issue therefrom, nor will the happiness of the world of humanity, which is the ultimate aim, be attained. For although, on the one hand, material achievements and the development of the physical world produce prosperity, which exquisitely manifests its intended aims, on the other hand dangers, severe calamities and violent afflictions are imminent. . . .

Progress and barbarism go hand in hand, unless material civilization be confirmed by Divine Guidance, by the revelations of the All-Merciful and by godly virtues, and be reinforced by spiritual conduct

This in order that the beauty and perfection of the world of man may be unveiled and be manifested before all in the utmost grace and splendour. Thus everlasting glory and happiness shall be revealed.

Baha'i: Selections from the Writings of Abdu'l-Baha, pp. 283-285

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The Web of Life:

This we know: All things are connected like the blood which unites one family. . . .We did not weave the web of life; we are merely a strand in it. Whatever we do to the web, we do to ourselves.

Chief Seattle, Suquamish chief

Regard ye the world as a man's body, which is afflicted with divers ailments, and the recovery of which dependeth upon the harmonizing of all its component elements.

Baha'i: Baha'u'llah, Summons of the Lord of Hosts, p. 80

How much the organs, the members and the parts of the body of man are intermingled and connected for mutual aid and help, and how much they influence one another! In the same way, the parts of this infinite universe have their members and elements connected with one another, and influence one another spiritually and materially.

Baha'i: `Abdu'l-Bahá, Some Answered Questions, pp. 245-246

In like manner, all the members of the human family, whether peoples or governments, cities or villages, have become increasingly interdependent. For none is self-sufficiency any longer possible, inasmuch as political ties unite all peoples and nations, and the bonds of trade and industry, of agriculture and education, are being strengthened every day.

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The Blessed Beauty [Baha'u'llah] saith: **'Ye are all the fruits of one tree, the leaves of one branch.'** Thus hath He likened this world of being to a single tree, and all its peoples to the

leaves thereof, and the blossoms and fruits. It is needful for the bough to blossom, and leaf and fruit to flourish; and upon the interconnection of all parts of the world-tree, dependeth the flourishing of leaf and blossom, and the sweetness of the fruit.

For this reason must all human beings powerfully sustain one another Let them purify their sight and behold all humankind as leaves and blossoms and fruits of the tree of being.

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The Lord of all mankind hath fashioned this human realm to be a Garden of Eden, an earthly paradise. If, as it must, it findeth the way to harmony and peace, to love and mutual trust, it will become a true abode of bliss, a place of manifold blessings and unending delights. Therein shall be revealed the excellence of humankind, therein shall the rays of the Sun of Truth shine forth on every hand.

Baha'i: Selections from the Writings of Abdu'l-Baha, pp. 31-32, 1, 27