

A Prayer for the Earth

Why do the nations so furiously rage together, why do the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth rise up and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord and against his anointed. (George Frederic Handel, Psalm 2:1, 2).

Why O Lord are the nations of this world so unwilling to come to to spare the Earth from your anger?

You have made it known that you care for the people who inhabit this tiny speck in your vast universe we call Earth.

You have made it known to us through the Hebrew people of long ago that you are our Creator, who has on your behalf entrusted this Earth and all that lives on it to our care.

When the ancients did not listen to your calling you inspired prophets to write down your messages on parchment and scrolls, and to tell the people of your unwavering love for all your creatures that inhabit this planet.

When the people still did not respond to your calling you sent your Son, who, filled with your Spirit, taught us how to love one another and how to bring lasting peace and justice to this world. He made it clear that there can be no peace without justice.

Lord, some have heard your calling and have responded by changing their lifestyles to be in greater harmony with the laws of your Earth. They have begun to talk about the need to curtail our extravagant spending of the earthly resources which you

prepared for us eons ago as captured sunlight.

Globally we have begun to live entirely on **ecological credit** as we are now spending more each year than the Earth can produce. But we fear the Earth is about to call in the loan.

Lord, we have heard your calling to begin to understand how we have poisoned your Earth with toxins we so thoughtlessly flush away, without knowing where away really is. We are beginning to learn why so many of your creatures that inhabit the Earth are disappearing at an alarming rate, never to be seen again. We have learned how we have damaged the ozone layer that once protected plants, animals, and people from harmful radiation.

We devised these chemicals to serve our own vanity and air-conditioned comforts. We only learned later that you had provided a protective shield in the upper atmosphere to prevent harmful rays from reaching all your creatures that inhabit this planet.

It now will take several generations to undo the damage we have caused and will have to leave it to children yet to be born to finish this task of healing the ozone layer we destroyed.

Our excessive overuse of fossil fuels we burn in our cars to maintain our unsustainable lifestyles is filling up the atmosphere with carbon dioxide, methane, and other greenhouse gases far beyond the limits of your designs.

Yet the people of the industrialized nations persist on flocking to their stores, urged on by advertisers, to spend money they often do not have, compounding the problems we have created in the economy of the Earth.

Not only is our Earth filled to capacity with people; our resources are being stretched beyond its capacity to heal itself.

Lord, forgive us our folly. May we understand that far too many of our ways are not your ways.

Lord, as we pray this prayer, may we be ever mindful of the futility to attempt dealing with environmental problems only, without also addressing the scourge of world poverty.

Deep in their hearts most people understand that we cannot solve our problems when a major portion of our world community remains going hungry every day, while others continue to take for themselves ever-greater portions of wealth from your Earth.

We cannot solve our problems when each day too many children continue to die from easily preventable, waterborne diseases before they reach the age of five.

We can provide clean water to cure this tragedy at little cost to us, living in a nation you have blessed so abundantly with water.

Lord, empower each one of us with new resolve to find it within ourselves to save a child from an untimely death.

We pray this prayer in the name of him who offered us his life-given water, so we will never thirst again for new answers that we seek. Answers we really already know deep in our hearts if we are honest with ourselves. Amen



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