



MAN'S DOMINION AND ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITIES IN THE WORLD

1. Genesis 1:28

<p>And G-d blessed them and G-d 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 sky, and all life that creeps upon the earth”.</p>	<p>וַיְבָרֶךְ אֱלֹהִים וַיֹּאמֶר לָהֶם אֱלֹהִים פְּרוּ וּרְבוּ וּמְלֵאוּ אֶת-הָאָרֶץ וְכִבְשׁוּהָ וּרְדוּ בְדִגְתַּי הַיָּם וּבְעוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם וּבְכָל-חַיַּי הַרְמֵשֶׁת עַל-הָאָרֶץ:</p>
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2. Bereshit Rabba 8:12

<p>“And dominate over the fish of the sea” – Rabbi Ḥanina said: If they merit it, [they will] dominate [<i>redu</i>], but if not, they will fall [<i>yeredu</i>]. Rabbi Yaakov of Kefar Ḥanin said: One who fulfills “in our image, in our likeness – “And dominate”; those who do not fulfill “in our image, in our likeness” – they will fall [<i>yeredu</i>].</p>	<p>וּרְדוּ בְדִגְתַּי הַיָּם (בְּרֵאשִׁית א, כח), (אָמַר רַבִּי חֲנִינְיָא, אִם זָכָה רְדוּ, וְאִם לֹא יֵרְדוּ. אָמַר רַבִּי יַעֲקֹב דְּכַפְר חֲנִין, אֶת שְׁהוּא בְּצַלְמֵנוּ כְּדַמוּתֵנוּ, וּרְדוּ. אֶת שְׁאִינוּ בְּצַלְמֵנוּ כְּדַמוּתֵנוּ, יֵרְדוּ.</p>
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3. Deuteronomy 20:19-20

<p>If you besiege a city for a long period of time, waging war against it to conquer it, you may not destroy its trees by cutting them down with an axe. For you would eat from the tree; you shall not cut it down— are trees like the man in the field who would retreat into the besieged city?</p> <p>You may only destroy a tree that you know does not produce fruit, cutting it down in order to build structures for the siege against the city warring with you, until its fall.</p>	<p>כִּי-תִצֹר אֶל-עִיר יָמִים רַבִּים לְהִלָּחֵם עָלֶיהָ לְתַפְשָׁהּ לֹא-תִשְׁחִית אֶת-עֵצֶיהָ לְנִדַּח עָלֶיהָ גִרְזֵן כִּי מִמֶּנּוּ תֹאכַל וְאֵתוֹ לֹא תִכְרֹת כִּי הָאָדָם עֵץ הַשָּׂדֶה לְבַא מִפְּנֵיךְ בַּמִּצֹּר:</p> <p>רַק עֵץ אֲשֶׁר-תִּדְעַ כִּי-לֹא-עֵץ מֹאכֵל הוּא אֵתוֹ תִשְׁחִית וְכָרַת וּבְנִית מִצֹּר עַל-הָעִיר אֲשֶׁר-הוּא עֹשֶׂה עִמָּךְ מִלְחָמָה עַד רִדְתָּה: {פ}</p>
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4. Sanhedrin 59a

<p>There is nothing that is permitted to Jews that is forbidden to non-Jews. Nothing? What about war brides? The reason that a war bride is permitted to Jews and forbidden to non-Jews is that non-Jews are not authorized to conquer.</p>	<p>לֵיכָא מִידַעַם דְּלִישְׂרָאֵל שְׂרִי וְלַעֲבֹד כּוּכְבִּים אֲסוּר וְלֹא וְהָרִי יִפֹּת תּוֹאֵר הַתָּם מִשּׁוּם דְּלֹא בְנֵי כִּיבוּשׁ נִינְהוּ</p>
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MAN'S DOMINION AND ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITIES IN THE WORLD

5. Sefer HaChinuch, Mitzvah 529

<p>The root of this commandment is well-known — it is in order to teach our souls to love good and benefit and to cling to it. And through this, good clings to us and we will distance [ourselves] from all bad and destructive things. And this is the way of the pious and people of [proper] action — they love peace and are happy for the good of the creatures and bring them close to Torah, and they do not destroy even a grain of mustard in the world. And they are distressed by all loss and destruction that they see; and if they can prevent it, they will prevent any destruction with all of their strength. But not so are the wicked — the brothers of the destructive spirits. They rejoice in the destruction of the world, and they destroy themselves — [since] in the way that a person measures, so is he measured; which is to say that he clings to it forever, as the matter that is written (Proverbs 17:5), “the one who rejoices in calamity, will not be cleared (of evil).” And the one who desires the good and rejoices in it, “his soul will dwell in the good” forever. This is known and famous.ⁱ</p>	<p>שָׂרֵשׁ הַמִּצְוָה יְדוּעַ, שֶׁהוּא כְּדֵי לְלַמֵּד נַפְשׁוֹ לְאַהֲבָה הַטּוֹב וְהַתּוֹעֵלֶת וְלִהְדַּבֵּק בּוֹ, וּמִתּוֹךְ כֵּן תִּדְבֹק בְּנוֹ הַטּוֹבָה, וְנִרְחִיק מִכָּל דְּבַר רַע וּמִכָּל דְּבַר הַשְּׁחֵתָה. וְזֶהוּ דְרָרָה הַחֲסִידִים וְאֲנָשֵׁי מַעֲשֵׂה, אוֹהֲבִים שְׁלוֹם וּשְׂמֵחִים בְּטוֹב הַבְּרִיּוֹת וּמְקַרְבִּים אוֹתָן לַתּוֹרָה, וְלֹא יֵאָבְדוּ אֶפְלוֹ גֶרֶגֶר שֶׁל חֶרְדֵּל בְּעוֹלָם, וַיִּצַר עֲלֵיהֶם בְּכָל אֲבִדוֹן וְהַשְּׁחֵתָה שְׂיֵרָאוּ, וְאִם יִכְלוּ לְהַצִּיל יִצִּילוּ כָּל דְּבַר מִהַשְּׁחִית בְּכָל כַּחַם. וְלֹא כֵן הַרְשָׁעִים אַחֵיהֶם שֶׁל מִדְּיָקִים, שְׂמֵחִים בְּהַשְּׁחֵתָת עוֹלָם, וְהֵמָּה מַשְׁחִיתִים אֶת עַצְמָם, בְּמַדָּה שֶׁאֲדָם מוֹדֵד בָּהּ מוֹדֵדִין לוֹ. כְּלוּמַר, בָּהּ הוּא נִדְבֵק לְעוֹלָם, וְיִכְעֲנֶנּוּ שְׂכָתוֹב (מִשְׁלֵי יז, ה) שֶׁמֶח לֹא יִנְקָה. וְהַחֲפֵץ בְּטוֹב וּשְׂמֵחַ בּוֹ נִפְשׁוֹ בְּטוֹב תְּלִין לְעוֹלָם, זֶה יְדוּעַ וּמִפְרָסָם.</p>
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6. Kohelet Rabbah 7:13

<p>When the Holy One blessed be He created Adam the first man, He took him and showed him all the trees in the Garden of Eden, and He said to him: ‘See My creations, how beautiful and exemplary they are. Everything I created, I created for you. Make certain that you do not ruin and destroy My world, as if you destroy it, there will be no one to mend it after you.’ⁱⁱ</p>	<p>בְּשַׁעַר שֶׁבְרָא הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא אֶת אָדָם הַרְאֵשׁוֹן, נָטְלוֹ וְהִחְזִירוֹ עַל כָּל אֵילָנֵי גֵן עֵדֵן, וְאָמַר לוֹ, רְאֵה מַעֲשֵׂי כַּמָּה נְאִים וּמִשְׁבְּחֵי הֵן, וְכָל מַה שֶׁבְּרָאתִי בְּשִׁבְלֶךָ בְּרָאתִי, תֵּן דַּעְתְּךָ שֶׁלֹּא תִקְלַקֵּל וְתַחַרֵּב אֶת עוֹלָמִי, שֶׁאִם קִלְקַלְתָּ אֵין מִי שְׂיִתְקַן אַחֲרָיֶךָ</p>
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ⁱ Sefer HaChinuch, translated by R. Francis Nataf, Sefaria 2018

ⁱⁱ The Sefaria Midrash Rabbah, 2022