

Modern Environmentalism & Animal Rights

Introduction: The Emergence of Modern Environmentalism & Animal Rights Advocacy

Organizational Historical Overview:

- 1866 - SPCA (Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals)**
works “to alleviate pain, fear and suffering in animals through means such as humane law enforcement, legislative advocacy, education and hands-on animal care.”
- 1892 - Sierra Club**
enables “members them to explore, enjoy, and protect the Earth and it helps translate concern into concrete, effective action.”
- 1895 - Wildlife Conservation Society**
operates “five public wildlife facilities, works to save wildlife and wild lands throughout the world, inspires care for nature, pioneered environmental education programs, and helped sustain biological diversity.”
- 1954 - Humane Society**
promotes “the humane treatment of animals and to fosters respect, understanding, and compassion for all creatures. Today their message of care and protection embraces not only the animal kingdom but also the Earth and its environment.”
- 1971 - Greenpeace**
uses “non-violent, creative confrontation to expose global environmental problems and to force solutions that are essential to a green and peaceful future.”
- 1980 - PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals)**
is “dedicated to establishing and protecting the rights of all animals and operates under the simple principle that animals are not ours to eat, wear, experiment on or use for entertainment.”
- 1990 - Gaia Community**
is “an Earth-based religious community (Kansas City, MO) whose shared goal is to live in right relationship with ourselves and our neighbor and to walk lightly on the land. They follow the “Gaia theory” of James Lovelock (1970s) which says the planet Earth is a self-regulating organism with man a mere strand in the web of life.”

PETA Principles...

animals are not ours to eat, wear, experiment on or use for entertainment

GAIA Theory...

the planet Earth is a self-regulating organism with man a mere strand in the web of life

Biblical Principles:

- [1] **Mankind, male and female, alone are said to be in the image of God (Gen. 1:26-27). God established the death penalty to protect his image in mankind (Gen. 9:6).**

Genesis 1:26-27 - Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground." So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

Genesis 9:6 - "Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God has God made man.

- [2] **Adam, father of mankind, alone received the breath of life from God (Gen 2:7).**

Genesis 2:7 - the LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being.

- [3] **God assigns mankind the task of subduing and ruling over the animals (Gen. 1:28). His dominion began in his naming the animals (Gen 2:19-20). This task was made more difficult by Adam's fall (Gen. 3:17-19).**

Genesis 1:28 - God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground."

Genesis 2:19-20 - Now the LORD God had formed out of the ground all the beasts of the field and all the birds of the air. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. So the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds of the air and all the beasts of the field.

Genesis 3:17-19 - To Adam he said, "Because you listened to your wife and ate from the tree about which I commanded you, 'You must not eat of it,' "Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat of it all the days of your life. It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field. By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return."

- [4] **Plant life, likewise, was placed by God under man's control to nurture and to provide him a source of sustenance (Gen. 1:29; 2:15-16)**

Genesis 1:29 - Then God said, "I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food.

Genesis 2:15-16 - .The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. And the LORD God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden;

- [5] **Animals are indeed intended for food. God required Israel to eat lamb (Ex. 12:3-4, 6-8), Jesus Himself served fish (Mat. 14:19-20).**

Exodus 12:3, 6-7 - Tell the whole community of Israel that on the tenth day of this month each man is to take a lamb for his family, one for each household. Take care of them until the fourteenth day of the month, when all the people of the community of Israel must slaughter them at twilight. Then they are to take some of the blood and put it on the sides and tops of the doorframes of the houses where they eat the lambs.

Matthew 14:19 - And he directed the people to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke the loaves. Then he gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the people.

- [6] **Animal skin and fur is suitable for clothing mankind. The first clothes, provided by God, were made of animal skin (Gen. 3:21).**

Genesis 3:21 - The LORD God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife and clothed them.

- [7] **The slaughter of animals for sacrifice / worship can be pleasing to God as demonstrated by Abel (Gen. 4:4), the covenant with Abraham (Gen. 15:8-21), the offering of a ram rather than Isaac (Gen. 22:3-14), the Mosaic sacrificial system (Mal. 1:6-8) and Jesus' presentation by his parents (Lu. 2:22-24). These sacrifices pointed to and are fulfilled in Jesus (1 Cor. 5:7).**

Genesis 4:4 - But Abel brought fat portions from some of the firstborn of his flock. The LORD looked with favor on Abel and his offering,

Genesis 15:8-10 - But Abram said, "O Sovereign LORD, how can I know that I will gain possession of it?" So the LORD said to him, "Bring me a heifer, a goat and a ram, each three years old, along with a dove and a young pigeon." Abram brought all these to him, cut them in two and arranged the halves opposite each other; the birds, however, he did not cut in half.

Genesis 22:7-8 - Isaac said, "but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?" Abraham answered, "God himself will provide the lamb for the burnt offering, my son."

Mal 1:6-8 - "A son honors his father, and a servant his master. If I am a father, where is the honor due me? If I am a master, where is the respect due me?" says the LORD Almighty. "It is you, O priests, who show contempt for my name. "But you ask, 'How have we shown contempt for your name?' When you bring blind animals for sacrifice, is that not wrong? When you sacrifice crippled or diseased animals, is that not wrong? Try offering them to your governor! Would he be pleased with you? Would he accept you?" says the LORD Almighty.

Luke 2:22-24 - When the time of their purification according to the Law of Moses had been completed, Joseph and Mary took him to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the Law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male is to be consecrated to the Lord"), and to offer a sacrifice in keeping with what is said in the Law of the Lord: "a pair of doves or two young pigeons."

1 Corinthians 5:7 - ... For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed.

- [8] **Fishing and hunting animals are not condemned in the Bible. Jesus even gave instructions regarding fishing (Lu. 5:4-6; Mat. 17:27).**

Luke 5:4-6 - When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Put out into deep water, and let down the nets for a catch." Simon answered, "Master, we've worked hard all night and haven't caught anything. But because you say so, I will let down the nets." When they had done so, they caught such

a large number of fish that their nets began to break.

Matthew 17:27 - "But so that we may not offend them, go to the lake and throw out your line. Take the first fish you catch; open its mouth and you will find a four-drachma coin. Take it and give it to them for my tax and yours."

- [9] **Government has the God-given authority and responsibility to restrain evil (Ro. 13:1-3) which could include cruelty to animals and harm to the environment.**

Romans 13:1, 4 - Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God... For he is God's servant to do you good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword for nothing. He is God's servant, an agent of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer.

- [10] **Man is to appreciate nature but is never to worship any created thing (Ex. 20:4-5; Ro. 1:21-23).**

Exodus 20:4-5 - You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. You shall not bow down to them or worship them...

Romans 1:21-23 - For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles.

- [11] **The earth has been destroyed before and will again be destroyed -- by God, not by man (2 Pet. 3:3-7, 10). This global warming will not be gradual.**

2 Peter 3:3-7, 10 - Know this first of all, that in the last days mockers will come with their mocking, following after their own lusts, and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation." For when they maintain this, it escapes their notice that by the word of God the heavens existed long ago and the earth was formed out of water and by water, through which the world at that time was destroyed, being flooded with water. But the present heavens and earth by His word are being reserved for fire, kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men... But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up.

Conclusion: The Psalm that pulls it Together (Psalm 8)

O LORD, our Lord, How majestic is Thy name in all the earth, Who hast displayed Thy splendor above the heavens! From the mouth of infants and nursing babes Thou hast established strength, Because of Thine adversaries, To make the enemy and the revengeful cease.

When I consider Thy heavens, the work of Thy fingers, The moon and the stars, which Thou hast ordained; What is man, that Thou dost take thought of him? And the son of man, that Thou dost care for him? Yet Thou hast made him a little lower than God, And dost crown him with glory and majesty!

Thou dost make him to rule over the works of Thy hands; Thou hast put all things under his feet, All sheep and oxen, And also the beasts of the field, The birds of the heavens, and the fish of the sea, Whatever passes through the paths of the seas.

O LORD, our Lord, How majestic is Thy name in all the earth!