

Notice! Listen!

A Reader's Theatre* for a Climate Emergency

(Based on scriptural allusions from Genesis to Revelation)

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***Optimal in a scenic Outdoor Environment, meant for 2 Readers**

Genesis 1, 2 & Psalm 24

Reader 1 (Read joyously): Do you see all of this [gestures to the surrounding environment]; all the earth is the Lord's, and everything in it! Open your eyes and notice; see the earth's heights and its depths; see the great light in the sky and the fertile earth below; notice the lush vegetation and the strong sturdy trees, rooted in the earth. Bend your frame low and notice things crawling on the earth, lift your eyes up and notice the birds, soaring in the sky. Look around you and notice the animals, hiding in the tall grass, scurrying up the trees, digging into the ground. Turn to your right and to your left and see your fellow human beings, creatures of the earth, made from dust and made in the Creator's image. Notice that the Creator has blessed everything and has given every created thing the freedom to flourish! God has made everything good!

Psalm 19 & 98, Isaiah 55:12

Reader 2 (Read joyously): Do you hear that? The heavens are telling the glory of God; and the firmament proclaims his handiwork. Open your ears and listen! All around you, the trees and fields and rivers and streams all clap their hands, the sea and all that fills it roars and the mountains and hills sing, everything joyously praising God, the creator. Listen to the hymn of all creation.

Genesis 2 & 11

Reader 1 (Read in somber tone): But wait...I see something else. Do you see it too? The Creator's earth has been claimed and surveyed, bordered, and bought by the Lord's creature, the human being. Not content only to tend the garden of the Lord as the Lord's servant, the human being has grasped after a name for itself, building endless great cities and towers reaching to the heavens. Notice what has happened to the heights above and the depths below when human dominion leads to destruction: superstorms cause destruction, vegetation is lost to drought, whole forests felled for new 'development,' lands are made desolate by wars of greed.

Isaiah 1, 2, Jeremiah 2, Zechariah 11 & Romans 8

Reader 2 (Read in somber tone): But wait...I hear something else. Do you hear it too? The heavens are horrified and the forests wail at the evil human beings bring upon the earth! I also hear another sound: silence. What has happened to the rich chorus of creaturely praise? Some creatures no longer sing; the homes the creator made for them are lost. I can hear the creation groan under the curse; groan under its slavery to corruption: it has been subjected to the futility of voracious human greed.

Matthew 5 & 6

Reader 1 (Read in hopeful tone): But wait...do you see that! Do you notice him? There is a teacher on a mountain. What is he saying?

Reader 2: (Read in hopeful tone): I can hear his voice, can you? He speaks of inheriting the earth through meekness and gentleness. He is calling his people to lose their life to save it, to not store up treasures on earth and to forget about gaining the whole world.

Revelation 21 & 22

Reader 1 (Read excitedly): I see something else! It's a vision of a city, so very different from our towers that reach to the heavens. There is a river that runs through this city, and there are trees full of fruit, and the leaves on the trees are healing the nations.

Reader 2 (Read excitedly): I hear something else! I hear a voice from this vision saying: "Live into this vision!" It is a vision of all things made new, renewed with the Creator's goodness and with humble, human service. "The blessing can return!" "The curse can be overcome."

Readers 1 & 2 Together: Notice! Listen!