

FALL 2016

REL 394 (course line 91223)
JST 394 (course line 91215)
SOS 394 (course line 91570)
LL 240 3:00-4:15

RELIGION AND ECOLOGY

Instructor:

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Office Hours: T/TH 1:00-2:30

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Course Description:

The world today is in the midst of a major ecological crisis that is manifested in extreme weather events, loss of biodiversity, depletion of fisheries, pollution of air, water, and soil, prolonged draughts, and mass extinction of species. Since the 1970s world religions have begun to grapple with the religious significance of the environmental crisis, examining their own scriptures, rituals and ethics in order to articulate religious responses to the ecological crisis. This course explores how the Abrahamic religions—Judaism, Christianity and Islam—have addressed the ecological crisis for the past fifty years. Preserving the distinctiveness of each religious tradition, this course examines the resources for ecological responses within each tradition; the emergence of new religious ecologies and ecological theologies; the contribution of world religions to environmental ethics; and the degree to which the environmental crisis functioned as the basis of inter-faith collaboration. Special attention will be given to the contribution of religion to animal studies, ecofeminism and goddess religion, and religion and the science of ecology, and the interplay between faith, scholarship and activism.

Required Texts (to be purchased):

Bauman, Whitney A. Richard R. Bohannon II and Kevin J. Obrien (eds.). *Grounding Religion: A Field Guide to the Study of Religion and Ecology*. London and New York: Routledge, 2011.

Gottlieb, Roger S. *A Greener Faith: Religious Environmentalism and Our Planet's Future*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006.

John Grim and Mary Evelyn Tucker, *Ecology and Religion*. Washington DC: Island Press, 2014.

Joni Adamson, William A. Gleason, and David N. Pellow. *Keywords for Environmental Studies*. New York: New York University Press, 2015.

Additional Readings available on Black Board:

Additional essays and book chapters from the following books are available on the Black Board site for the course:

Foltz, Richard C. (ed.). *Worldviews, Religion, and the Environment*. Thomson/Wadsworth, 2003.

Foltz Richard C., Frederick Denny, and Azizan Baharuddin (eds.). *Islam and Ecology: A Bestowed Trust*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003.

Gottlieb, Roger S. (ed.). *This Sacred Earth: Religion, Nature, Environment*. New York: Routledge, 1996.

_____. *Oxford Handbook of Religion and Ecology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006.

Hessel, Dieter and Rosemary Radford Reuther (eds.). *Christianity and Ecology: Seeking the Well-Being of Earth and Humans*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000.

Tirosh-Samuelson, Hava (ed.) *Judaism and Ecology: Created World and Revealed Word*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002.

Martin D. Yaffe (ed.), *Jewish Environmental Ethics: A Reader*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Press, 2001.

Requirements:

1. Assignment # 1: Review of Bauman (et al), *Grounding Religion* (15%)
2. Assignment # 2: Review of Grim and Tucker, *Ecology and Religion* (15%)
3. Assignment # 3: Review of Roger Gottlieb, *A Greener Faith* (15%)
4. Assignment # 4: Review of Adamson (ed. et al) *Keywords for Environmental Studies* (15%)
5. Final Research Paper (30%) (choose a topic from the suggested list for a paper of 10-12 pages)

6. Class Reports about Environmental Activism (5%)
7. Class Attendance and Participation (5%)

Grading Scale:

A+: 95-100
A: 91-94
A-: 87-90
B+: 83-86
B: 78-82
B-: 74-77
C+: 69-73
C: 64-68
D: 60-63
E: under 60

Course Policies

Withdrawals and Incompletes:

<http://www.asu.edu/aad/catalogs/general/ug-enrollment.html#grading-system>

Academic Dishonesty: The School of Historical, Philosophical and Religious Studies abides by ASU's "Student Academic Integrity Policy."

<http://provost.asu.edu/academicintegrity>

Plagiarism: Plagiarism is stealing. Whenever you borrow a phrase, sentence, paragraph—even an idea stated in your own words—from any outside source (news writing, magazine, TV show, book) without giving credit to that source, you have plagiarized. Plagiarism is cheating yourself and someone else. The consequences are severe including failure for the assignment, probable failure for the course, disciplinary referral to the Dean and possible expulsion from the University. For more information, see the Writing Programs Guide at <http://english.clas.asu.edu/writingprograms>.

Disability Accommodations: Qualified students with disabilities who will require disability accommodations in this class are encouraged to make their requests to me at the beginning of the semester either during office hours or by appointment. **Note:** Prior to receiving disability accommodations, verification of eligibility from the Disability Resource Center (DRC) is required. Disability information is confidential.

Establishing Eligibility for Disability Accommodations: Students who feel they will need disability accommodations in this class but have not registered with the Disability Resource Center (DRC) should contact DRC immediately. Their office is located on the first floor of the Matthews Center Building. DRC staff can also be reached at: 480-965-1234 (V), 480-965-9000 (TTY). For additional information, visit:

www.asu.edu/studentaffairs/ed/drc. Their hours are 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM, Monday through Friday.

Course Outline

All assigned readings should be read before class. We will discuss the readings in class.

Unit I: World Religions and the Ecological Crisis

Introduction

8/18: Session # 1: Introduction to Course

Week 1: Framing the Problem

8/23 Session # 2: Environmental Studies: Creating a Shared Vocabulary

Readings:

Adamson (ed. et al) *Keywords in Environmental Studies*:

We will discuss the following entries:

“Anthropocene,” “Bioregionalism,” “Biosphere,” “Climate Change,”
 “Conservation-Preservation,” “Ecology,” “Environment,” “Environmentalism(s),”
 “Environmental Justice,” “Extinction,” “Natural Disaster,” “Nature,” “Species,”
 “Sustainability.”

8/25 Session # 3: Religion as the Cause of the Environmental Crisis

Readings:

Mary Evelyn Tucker and John Grim, “Religion,” in *Keywords in Environmental Studies*, pp. 172-174.

Lynn White Jr. “The Historic Root of the Our Ecologic Crisis,” in Foltz (ed.), *Worldviews, Religion and Environment*, pp. 30-37.*

Seyyed Hosseyn Nasr, “The Problem,” in Foltz (ed.) *Worldviews, Religion and Environment*, pp. 20-30.*

Carolyn Merchant, "Dominion over Nature," in Foltz (ed.), *Worldviews*, pp. 39-49.*

Week 2: The Field of Religion and Ecology

8/30 Session # 4: World Religions Take Note of the Environmental Crisis

Readings:

Statements from Pope John Paul II; American Baptist Churches, USA; Evangelical Lutheran Churches in America, in *This Sacred Earth*, edited by Roger S. Gottlieb, pp. 230-269.*

Recommended:

Pope Francis I, *Laudato Si: On Care for Our Home* (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2015) (available online).

9/1 Session # 5: From Eco-Theology to Religion and Ecology

Readings:

Bauman (et al), *Grounding Religion*, pp. 1-26; 50-63.

John Grim and Mary Evelyn Tucker, *Ecology and Religion*, 29-95.

Unit II: The Hebrew Bible: The Cause of the Problem or the Solution to It?

Week 3: Creation in the Hebrew Bible

9/6 Session # 6: Genesis and the Creation of the Human: Human Dominion?

Readings:

Randall Smith, "Creation and the Environment in the Hebrew Scripture: A Transvaluation of Values," in *Green Discipleship: Catholic Theological Ethics and the Environment*, pp. 74-91.*

Jonathan Morgan, "The Creation Stories: Their Ecological Potential and Problems," in *Ecological Hermeneutics: Biblical, Historical, and Theological Perspectives*, edited by David G. Horrell and Cheryl Hunt, pp. 21-31.*

9/8 Session # 7: Nature in the Bible

Readings:

Aloys Hutterman, "Genesis 1 – The Most Misunderstood Part of the Bible," in Foltz (ed.), *Worldviews*, pp. 280-289.*

Robert D. Sacks, "Commentary on the Book of Genesis:" Chapter 1." In Yaffe (ed.), *Judaism and Environmental Ethics: A Reader*, pp. 143-157.*

Jeanne Kay, "Concepts of Nature in the Hebrew Bible," in Yaffe (ed.), *Judaism and Environmental Ethics*, pp. 86-104.*

Week 4: Covenantal Environmental Ethics

9/13 Session # 8: Creation Care in the Bible: Soil, Plants and Animals

Readings:

David Ehrenfeld and Philip J. Bentley, "Judaism and the Practice of Stewardship," in *Judaism and Environmental Ethics*, pp. 125-135.*

Eilon Schwartz, "Bal Tashchit: A Jewish Environmental Precept," in Yaffe (ed.), *Judaism and Environmental Ethics*, pp. 230-249.*

"Sacrifice In Leviticus: Eco-Friendly Ritual or Unholy Waste, in Horrell (ed. at al), *Ecological Hermeneutics*, 32-45.*

9/15 Session # 9: Holiness, Morality, and the Concern for the Marginal

Readings:

Gerald Blidstein, "Man and Nature in the Sabbatical Year," In *Judaism and Environmental Reader*, pp. 138-142.*

Arthur Waskow, "What is Eco-Kosher," In *This Sacred Earth*, pp. 297-300.*

Week 5: The New Testament and Christian Environmental Ethics

9/20 Session # 10: Theology of Grace and the Environment

Readings:

Thomas Bushlack, "A New Heaven and a New Earth: Creation in the New Testament," in *Green Discipleship Catholic Theological Ethics and the Environment*, pp. 93-111.*

Brendan Byrne, SJ, "An Ecological Reading of Rom. 8.19-22: Possibilities and Hesitations," in David Horrell (ed. et al), *Ecological Hermeneutics*, pp. 83-93.*

9/22 Session # 11: Imitation Christi and Christian Environmental Ethics

Readings:

Anna Peterson, "Christian Theological Anthropology and Environmental Ethics," in Foltz, *Worldviews*, pp. 319-333.*

Sallie McFague, "An Ecological Christology: Does Christianity Have It" in Foltz (ed.), *Worldviews*, pp. 334-342.*

Calvin De Witt, "Three Big Questions," in Foltz (ed.) *Worldviews*, pp. 349-356.

Assignment # 1 Is Due

Unit III. Judaism and the Environment

Week 6: Rabbinic Judaism

9/27 Session # 12: The Sanctification of Nature in Rabbinic Judaism

Readings:

Michael Wyschogrod, "Judaism and the Sanctification of Nature," In *Judaism and Environmental Ethics*, 289-296.*

Ellen Bernstein, "Sukkot: Holiday of Joy," in Ellen Bernstein (ed.) *Ecology and the Jewish Spirit*, pp. 133-138.*

9/29 Session # 13: Sacred Texts and Jewish Alienation from Nature

Readings:

Steven Schwarzschild, "The Unnatural Jew," In Yaffe (ed.) *Judaism and Environmental Ethics*, pp. 267-282.*

Lenn Goodman, "Respect for Nature in the Jewish Tradition, in Tirosh-Samuels (ed.) *Judaism and Ecology*, pp. 227-258.*

Hava Tirosh-Samuels, "Judaism," in *Oxford Handbook of Religion and Ecology*, ed. Roger Gottlieb (2006), pp. 25-64.

Recommended:

Shalom Rosenberg, "Concepts of Torah and Nature in Jewish Thought," in Tirosh-Samuels (ed.), *Judaism and Ecology*, pp. 189-226.

Week 7: The Jewish Return to the Holy Land

10/4 Session # 14: The Zionist Return to the Holy Land: Continuity or Revolution

Readings:

"Branches: Zionism and the Land of Israel, in Ari Elon (ed. et al), *Tree, Earth, and Torah*, pp. 163-224.*

10/6 Session # 15: Environmental Challenges and Solutions in the Holy Land

Readings:

D. E. Ornstein, A. Tal, and C. Miller (eds.), *Between Ruin and Restoration: An Environmental History of Israel* (selected chapters):*

Daniel Orenstein, "Zionist and Israeli Perspectives on Population Growth and Environmental Impact in Palestine and Israel," pp. 82-103.

Valerie Brachya, "Toward Sustainable Development: Mainstreaming Environment in Israel," 285-308.

Daniel Orenstein and Emily Silverman, "The Future of Israeli Environmental Movement: Is a Major Paradigm Shift under Way?" pp. 357-81.

Orr Karassin, "The Battle of the 'True Believers': Environmentalism in Israeli Party Politics," 168-188.

Alon Tal, "Confronting Desertification: Evolving Perception and Strategies, 106-128.

Week 8: Contemporary Eco-Judaism

10/11 FALL BREAK (no Class) # 16: Jewish Eco-Theology and Activism

Readings:

10/13 Session # 17: Tikkun Olam: Jewish Environmental Activism

Readings:

Mark Jacob, "Jewish Environmentalism: Past Accomplishments, Future Challenges," in Tirosh-Samuels (ed.), *Judaism and Ecology*, pp. 449-480.*

Arthur Green, "Kabbalah for the Environmental Age," in Tirosh-Samuels (ed.), *Judaism and Ecology*, pp. 1-15.*

David Seidenberg, "Jewish Ecological Thought and Challenge for Scriptural Theology," in his *Kabbalah and Ecology*, pp. 1-40.*

Recommended:

Tirosh-Samuels, "Jewish Environmentalism: Bridging Scholarship, Faith, and Activism," in *Jewish Thought, Jewish Belief*, ed. Daniel J. Lasker, pp. 65-117.*

Report on 10 Jewish environmental organizations (5 from the US and 5 from Israel).

Unit IV: Christianity and the Environment

Week 9: Sources of Christian Environmental Theology

10/18 Session # 18: Catholic Sources

Readings:

Keith Douglas Warner, "Retrieving Saint Francis: Tradition and Innovation for our Ecological Vocation," in Winright (ed.), *Green Discipleship*, pp. 114-128.*

David P. Schied, "Saint Thomas Aquinas: The Thomistic Tradition, and the Cosmic Common Good," in Winright (ed.) *Green Discipleship*, pp. 129-147.*

Christopher P. Vogt, "Catholic Social Teaching and Creation," in *Green Discipleship*, pp. 220-241.

10/20 Session # 19: Protestant Eco-Theology

Readings:

Sallie McFague, "The Scope of the Body: The Cosmic Christ," in Gottlieb (ed.), *This Sacred Earth*, pp. 286-296.*

Calvin DeWitt, "Creation Environmental Challenges to Evangelical Theory," in R.J. Berry (ed.), *The Care of Creation*, pp. 60-73; *

Wesley Granger-Michaelson, (ed.), *Tending the Garden: Essays on the Gospel and the Earth*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1987, pp. 30-49; 93-113; 114-131. *

Assignment # 2 is Due!

Week 10: Christian Environmental Ethics

10/25 Session # 20: The Principles of Christian Environmental Ethics

Readings:

Kathryn Lila Cox, "Green Solidarity, Liberation Theology, the Ecological Crisis and the Poor," in Winright (ed.), *Green Discipleship*, 266-284.*

Vernice Miller-Travis, "Social Transformation through Environmental Justice," in *Christianity and Ecology*, ed. Dieter Hessel and Rosemary Reuther, pp. 559-571.*

William Somplatsky-Jarman, "Partnership for the Environment among U.S. Christians: Reports from the National Religious Partnership for the Environment," in *Christianity and Ecology*, pp. 573-59.*

Patricia M. Mische, "The Integrity of Creation: Challenges and Opportunities for Praxis," in *Christianity and Ecology*, pp. 592-602.*

10/27 Session # 21: Christian Environmental Activism

Report: Discuss 10 Christian environmental organizations (1 Catholic; 4 Protestant, 3 Greek Orthodox and 1 non-denominational).

Unit V: Islam and the Environment

Week 11: Islam and the Environmental Crisis

11/1 Session # 22: Reinterpreting Islam

S. Nomanul Haq, "Islam and Ecology: Toward Retrieval and Reconstruction," In *Islam and Ecology*, pp. 212-154.*

June-Anne Greely, "Greater than the Creation of Mankind (Quran 40-57), in Winright (ed.), *Green Discipleship*, pp. 320-339.*

Othman Abd-ar-Rahman Llewellyn, "The Basis for a Discipline of Islamic Environmental Law," in *Islam and Ecology*, pp. 185-243.

11/3 Session # 23: Islamic Philosophy and Theology of Nature

Nawl H. Ammar, "An Islamic Response to the Manifest Ecological Crisis: Issues of Justice," in Foltz (ed.) *Worldviews*, pp. 376-391.*

Mawil Izzy Dien, "Islam and the Environment: Theory and Practice," in Foltz (ed.), *Islam and Ecology*, pp. 107-120.*

Week 12: Islam in a Global Context

11/8 Session # 24: What Islam Shares with Judaism and Christianity and Where It Differs

Sayyed Hosseyn Nasr, "Islam, the Contemporary Islamic World and the Environmental Crisis," in *Islam and Ecology*, pp. 85-106.*

Fazlun M. Khalid, "Islam, Ecology and Modernity: An Islamic Critique of the Root Causes of Environmental Degradation," in *Islam and Ecology*, 299-322.*

Richard Foltz, "Islamic Environmentalism: A Matter of Interpretation," In *Islam and Ecology*, pp. 249-280.*

11/10 Session # 25: Islamic Environmentalism Worldwide

Safei-Eldin A. Hamed, "Capacity Building for Sustainable Development: The Dilemma of Islamization of Environmental Institutions," In *Islam and Ecology*, pp. 403-422.

Report on 10 Muslim environmental organizations (three from Asia, three Africa, three from the Middle East and one from the U.S.).

Unit VI: Religion and Ecology: An Assessment

Week 13: Religious Environmentalism In America

11/15 Session # 26: How Did Religion Shape American Environmentalism

Readings:

Roger Gottlieb, *A Greener Faith: Religious Environmentalism and Our Planet's Future* (2006).

Assignment # 3 is Due!

11/17 Session # 27: Environmental Spirituality as a Challenge to Religion

Readings:

Bron Taylor, "Earth First! From Primal Spirituality to Ecological Resistance," in *This Sacred Earth*, 545-556.*

Bron Taylor, "Earth and nature-Based Spirituality (Part I): From Deep Ecology to Radical Environmentalism," *Religion* 31 (2001): 175-193.*

Bron Taylor, "Earth and Nature-Based Spirituality (Part II): From Earth First! And Bioregionalism to Scientific Paganism and the New Age," *Religion* 31 (2001): 225-245.*

Week 14: Sustainability and Eco-Justice as Religious Values

11/22 Session # 28: Eco-Justice and Religion

Readings:

Larry Rasmussen, "Global Eco-Justice: The Church's Mission in Urban Society," *Christianity and Ecology*, pp. 515-530.*

David Hallman, "Climate Change: Ethics, Justice and Sustainable Community, in Hessel and Reuther (eds.), *Christianity and Ecology*, pp. 453-472.*

Rosemary Radford Reuther, "Eco-Justice in the Center of the Church's Mission," in *Christianity and Ecology*, pp. 603-614.*

11/24 THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY (no class)

Week 15: Religion and Ecology in the Academy

11/29 Session # 29: Eco-Feminism: Gender and the Ecological Crisis

Readings:

Bauman, *Grounding Religion*, pp. 130-146.

Rosemary Radford Reuther, "Ecofeminism: The Challenge to Theology," in *Christianity and Ecology*, pp. 97-112.*

Greta Gaard, "Ecofeminism," in Adamson (ed. et al), *Keywords in Environmental Studies*, pp. 68-70.

12/1 Session # 30: Religion and the Science of Ecology

Readings:

Ian G. Barbour, "Scientific and Religious Perspectives on Sustainability," in *Christianity and Ecology*, pp. 385-402.*

Forrest Klingerman and Kevin J. O'Brien, "Playing God: Why Religion Belongs in the Climate Engineering Debate," *Bulleting of the Atomic Scientists* 7 (3) (2014): 27-37.

Assignment # 4 is due in Class.

Final research paper is due on December 6 during the Final Exam (2:30-4:20).

Topics for Research Papers on Religion and Ecology:

- The Bible as an Environmental Text
- The Bible as an Environmentally Inconvenient Text
- Environmental Wisdom in the New Testament

- Christian Eco-Theology (e.g., Thomas Berry; Holmes Rolston III; Sallie McFague, Calvin B. DeVitt, Rosemary Reuther, Willis Jenkins; John E. Cobb, Kristine Keller; Larry Rasmussen).
- Jewish Eco-Theology (e.g., Abraham Joshua Heschel; Arthur Waskow, Arthur Green; David Seidenberg; Ellen Bernstein; Jeremy Benstein).
- Muslim Eco-Theologian (e.g., Sayyed Hosseyn Nasr; Richard Foltz)
- Ecofeminist Spirituality (e.g., Rosemary Radford Reuther; Sallie McFague; Elizabeth E. Johnson; Starhawk; Rianne Eisler; Gloria Orenstein; Jill Hammer).
- Eco-Feminism as a Critique of Religious Traditions
- Christian Eco-Justice: Theory and Practice
- Muslim Environmentalism: Theory and Practice
- Religious Environmentalism as a Critique of Modernity
- Religious Environmentalism as a Critique of Capitalism
- Religious Environmentalism as a Post-Colonial Critique
- Radical Environmental Movements: Religion and Green Politics
- Judaism and Vegetarianism
- Animal Rights in Christianity
- Christian Environmental Virtues
- Treatment of Animals in Judaism
- Eco-Kosher: Jewish Environmental Ethics
- Eco-Hallal: Muslim Environmental Ethics
- Religion and Sustainability
- Ecological Spirituality
- Religious Environmentalism and Peace Efforts in the Middle East
- Christian Environmentalism and Indigenous Environmental Spirituality

- Eco-Criticism
- Environmental Spirituality in Contemporary Literature

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Derr, Patrick and Edward McNamara. *Case Studies in Environmental Ethics*. Lanham MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2003.

Hossay, Patrick. *Unsustainable: A Primer for Global Environmental and Social Justice*. Zed Books: 2005.

Lee, Kai N. and William Freudenberg. *Humans in the Landscape: An Introduction to Environmental Studies*.

Wright Richard T. and Dorothy F. Boorse. *Environmental Science: Toward a Sustainable Future* (12th ed.). Boston: Pearson Education, 2013

Religion and Ecology: Overviews

Bauman, Whitney A, Richard R. Bohannon II, and Kevin J. O'Brien. *Grounding Religion: A Field Guide to the Study of Religion and Ecology*. London and New York, Routledge.

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Jenkins, Willis, Mary Evelyn Tucker and John Grim (eds.). *Routledge Handbook of Religion and Ecology*. New York and London: Routledge, 2017.

Oelschlaeger, Max. *Caring for Creation: An Ecumenical Approach to the Environmental Crisis*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1994.

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Tucker, Mary Evelyn: *Worldviews and Ecology: Religion, Philosophy and the Environment*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1994.

The Bible and the Environment:

Bauckman, Richard. *The Bible and Ecology: Rediscovering the Community of Creation*. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press. 2010.

Boersma, Ian J. *The Torah and the Stoics: On Humankind and Nature; A Contribution to the Debate on Sustainability and Quality*. Leiden: Brill, 2001.

Davis, Ellen E. *Scripture, Culture and Agriculture: An Agrarian Reading of the Bible*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009.

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Habel, Norman C. and Shirley Wurst (eds.) *The Earth Story in Genesis* (The Earth Bible 2; Sheffield and Cleveland Ohio: Sheffield Academic Press/Pilgrim Press, 2000.

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Hillel, Daniel. *The Natural History of the Bible*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2006.

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Hüttermann, Aloys. *The Ecological Message of the Torah: Knowledge, Concepts and Laws Which Made Survival in the "Land of Milk and Honey" Possible*. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1999.

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Cohen, Jeremy. "*Be Fertile and Increase, Fill the Earth and Master It*": *The Ancient and Medieval Carrier of a Biblical Text*. Ithaca N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1989.

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