

## PSALM 24, verses 1-5

To David, a Psalm:

The Earth is God's, and the fullness thereof; the world, and those that inhabit her.  
For God has founded it upon [primal] waters, and has established it upon rivers.  
Who shall go up to the mountain of God, who shall rise up to the place of God's holiness?

Those of clean hands, and pure hearts, who have not lifted their souls up to falsehood; who do not make promises deceitfully.

Such a person will bear blessing from God, and righteousness from the God of their salvation.

### HOMILY, Rabbi Fred Scherlinder Dobb

"The Earth is God's." This simple statement has reverberated for millennia at the core of the biblical call for justice.

When the rabbis of the Talmud looked for a text which would undergird the entirety of business law – to remind us that profit-seeking is a privilege, not a right! – they chose "Ladonai haaretz um'lo-oh."

When the peasants and Priests of Latin America based their theology of liberation in Scripture – to remind us that profit and protection must be spread equitably among all God's children and all Creation – they chose "La Tierra de la Senor."

And today, as we humbly stand in the shadow of our nation's short-sighted and misguided energy policy, we too choose "The Earth is the Lord's."

Our text is from Psalms, a nearly 3000-year old collection, the hymnal used in the days of the First Temple. Taking the biblical view, we ask: where might our Earth and our society be in another 3000 years (much less 30 years), if we continue to rely primarily on fossil fuels? If our leaders outline energy policy without ever uttering the words "climate change?" If we so much as consider drilling for oil in the unspoiled Alaskan wilderness rather than ask SUVs to get slightly better mileage? If we draw the ire of the international community in our day, much less the condemnation of future generations? What does it say about our society that we act like the Earth is *ours*, not Yours?

The corporate model asks about the next quarter's profitability. The governmental model considers two to six years, the term of elected office. But people of spirit and faith look to future generations, endangered species, and the integrity of God's Creation on time scale that humbles us as individuals - yet raises us all, as a beloved community.

Holy One of Blessing, help us help each other, to serve on Your terms, not on ours... to remember that all this is Yours. AMEN