

Town Hall #5

10/29/19

Visiting Students:

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Eliav Zendehtel

Meme of The Week:



Jesus
is King



Tatty
My King

Outfit of the Week:



Mensch of the Week: GABY BENTOLILA



“Once Gaby (pictured left) realized not all the doorposts at Shalhevet had mezuzahs, she took the time out of her busy week to willingly to figure out exactly which ones needed them and told Rabbi Block about it.”

PLEASE

WELCOME RAV

JUDAH !!

Climate Change and Us.

10/29/19

Setting this up:

- This is not a conversation that will involve debating about if humans are having an impact on the climate.
- The conversation is about human agency, and our responsibility to the planet from a moral, ethical, and religious perspective.

We understand the nature:

- A premise here is that to some extent, an undefined extent, humans impact the warming of our climate via things like waste, pollution, etc.
- Whether you think Miami will be underwater in 20 years or in 500 is irrelevant to us. Let's not think about it in terms of that.
- Just in terms that to some extent, humans do impact the climate.

Our Impact can cause TO SOME EXTENT:

- Rising water levels.
- Melting of arctics.
- Increases in natural disasters.
- Increases in wildfires.
- Polluted air and oceans.
- Endangering wildlife/ possible extinction of animals

Los Angeles Fires:

- Many people are experiencing fires that some believe are connected to our rising global temperatures.



Recently, on climate change:



Greta Thunberg's speech at the United Nations Climate Summit.



The global "Climate Strike" movement intensifies.

New Changes to Los Angeles

“L.A. restaurants cannot offer or provide disposable plastic straws to customers who are dining in or taking food to go unless customers request them.”

“Councilman Mitch O’Farrell heralded the decision as an important step toward confronting a ‘major environmental calamity that is unfolding before us.’”



Thoughts?

- Do you think banning plastic straws is a good or bad idea?

“It Isn’t Easy Being Green”

“Straws make up just 0.025 percent of the plastic that finds its way into the ocean each year; the United States, the biggest per capita producer of garbage on Earth, is not even close to the biggest producer of mismanaged plastic waste.”

Promoting a Green Conscience

“Maybe paper straws will persuade people to do the big stuff: stop flying, quit eating cows, give up their cars, have one fewer kid, vote into office politicians who could use the levers of government to do something meaningful.”

We need to focus on the “real” things:

“There are better, bigger policy proposals out there, and we desperately need them put into practice: bans on fishing, hefty taxes on plastic. The U.S. government needs to participate in the project of saving the planet; the most meaningful change any consumer can make is through voting.”

What is our responsibility?

- If plastic use is affecting our climate, does that mean you have a moral responsibility to not use single-use plastic? To use an electric car? Etc.
- If the beef & dairy industry emit large amounts of carbon, therefore polluting the atmosphere, do we have a moral responsibility to cut down on meat?

Small Changes:

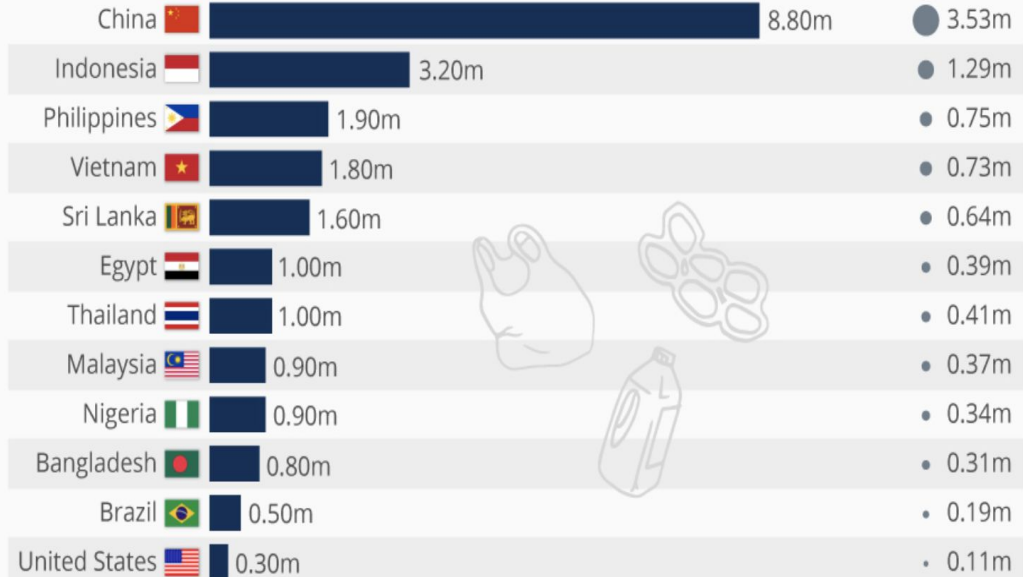
- Are small changes positive?
- Are they not enough?
- Are they necessary or unnecessary?

U.S. and other changes.

The Countries Polluting The Oceans The Most

Annual metric tons of mismanaged plastic waste and total amount ending up in global waters*

■ Mismanaged plastic waste ● Plastic marine debris



- The U.S. is still the second largest emitter and produces 15% of the world's air pollution. Though China is 30% of it, the U.S., per capita, emits 2X more than China.

As Americans:

- Though we couldn't stop the primary polluter: China, should we still set a precedent?
- What is our responsibility as Americans?
- Do we have a responsibility as a Liberal-Democracy?
- Do the little changes coincide with these larger more impactful changes?

From a Jewish Standpoint

- Many people view “To be a light among the nations,” as our purpose as Jews.
- The concepts of Tikun Olam--or just that God created this world for us but we have to take care of it--is also a principle of Judaism.
- Do we as Jews have a special responsibility to take “being green” to the next level?
- Why or why not?

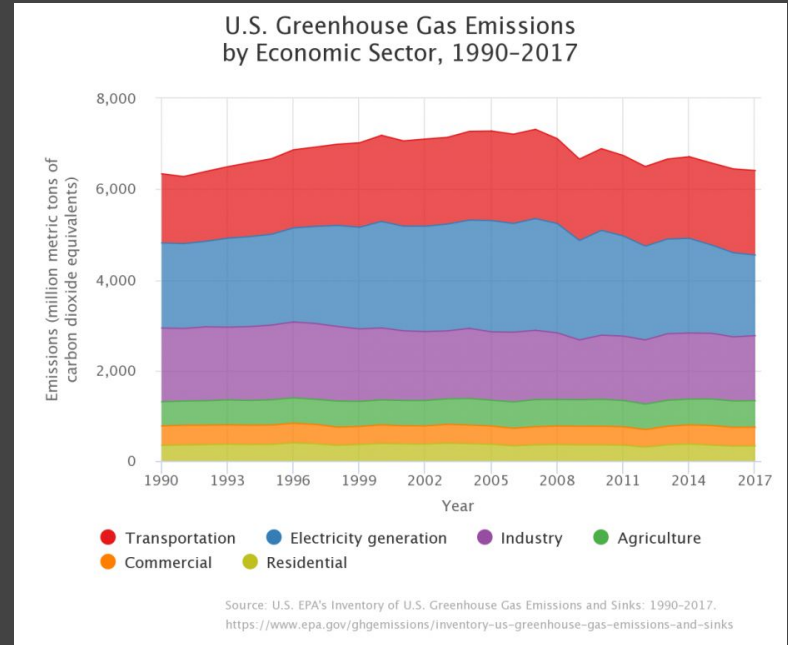
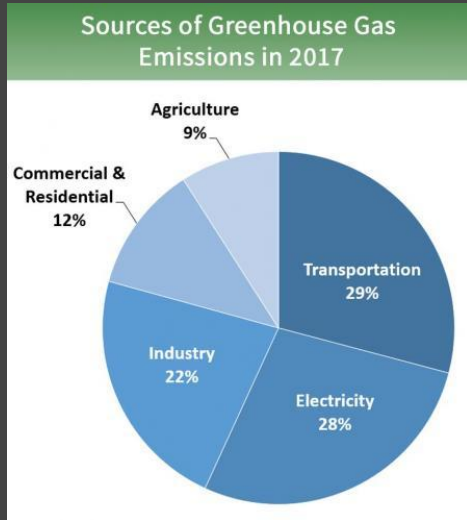
Let's do some defining:

- Carbon Emissions: Carbon dioxide being released into the atmosphere which contributes to the greenhouse effect.
- Greenhouses gasses: A gas that contributes to the greenhouse effect.
- Greenhouse effect: the trapping of the sun's warmth in a planet's lower atmosphere.

Moral Responsibility

- If you believe in climate change, does that mean you have a moral responsibility to not use single-use plastic? To use an electric car? Etc.
- Can you confidently consume meat when the beef industry contributes to incredible amounts of carbon emissions?
- Should Shalhevet only use climate-friendly products?
- Do individual's actions even matter when there will be entire countries damaging the environment anyways?

Statistics



What does this mean?

- Certain places on Earth would become inhabitable
- Miles of farmland would become barren
- Many species would go extinct
- Weather events would become more of a threat

EOS, "How Will Climate Change Affect the United States in Decades to Come?", 2017

USGS, "What are the long-term effects of climate change?", 2018

The Other Perspective

- The activist perspective suggests that the things in the previous quote (no more flying, no more meat, no more gasoline powered cars, etc.) might be a valid solution
- The other perspective suggests that political and cultural climate of alarmism and panic is not based on facts and is actually counterproductive, and that these methods are a complete waste of time and money
 - “Globally, there are just 5 million fully electric cars on the road. Even if this climbs massively to 130 million in 11 years, the International Energy Agency finds CO₂ equivalent emissions would be reduced by a mere 0.4 percent globally.”
- The real solutions lie not in alarmism, but in efficient, effective and practical solutions, such as
 - Nuclear power
 - “What the world needs is a carbon-free source of electricity that can be ramped up to massive scale very quickly and provide power reliably around the clock, regardless of weather conditions—all without expanding the total acreage devoted to electric generation. Nuclear power meets all of those requirements.”
 - Letting technologies develop and become more clean and efficient in the free market

An Issue of our Generation

Generation Z and up will have to deal with the effects of climate change if nothing is done.

- Sea Level will rise 1-4 feet by 2100
- The Arctic will become ice-free in the summer before 2050
- Hurricanes will become stronger and more intense
- More frequent droughts and heat waves
- Rising temperatures