



Spoken Teaching Points

The following represent possible talking points for your D'var Torah, Sermon, Dharma Talk, Khutbah, or other spoken teaching in your spiritual or faith community.

We are facing a Climate Emergency.

The Climate Emergency represents a grave and urgent threat to humanity, the global environment, the most vulnerable among us, and future generations. Our religious and spiritual traditions call us to care for each other and for Earth. However, the scientific consensus is powerful and direct: without incredibly ambitious and rapid action, we face brutal environmental disruption that will cost millions of lives, displace hundreds of millions from their homes, impoverish countless communities, and badly degrade ecosystems that support life. The most vulnerable among us will suffer worst, despite having contributed least to the problem.

To stabilize the climate at a level that is still dangerous but short of catastrophic levels, greenhouse gas emissions need to fall to a net zero level by 2050. This is an unprecedented challenge for humans, and it needs to happen immediately. This is what we call a climate emergency.

Despite the Paris Agreement, the problem is getting worse, not better.

Since the Paris Climate Agreement was signed in 2016, the world has actually lost ground in responding to climate change. Now, sadly, we are facing a true Climate Emergency.

- Globally, and in the US, carbon emissions have risen.
- The fossil fuel industry has spent more than \$1 billion since 2016 directly and through its trade associations lobbying against climate change legislation.
- The financial sector has increased its financing for new fossil fuel infrastructure to the tune of \$1.9 trillion since the Paris Agreement was signed.

This reality is alarming. Combined with a federal administration that is actively hostile to climate action, the prospects are dire.

People of faith and spirit must decide what response to the Climate Emergency they will support.

People of faith and spirit must decide what kind of response to climate change they will support. GreenFaith supports a response based on compassion, love and justice and believes that four conditions must guide our approach to climate change. Our response must:

- Be urgent and ambitious, meeting the scale of the problem at the fastest possible rate. A mobilization of society similar to past wartime mobilizations is needed.
- Be holistic. It must transform our energy, transportation, food and water systems, our buildings and infrastructure, and economic systems. All must change if we are to meet the challenge.
- Engage those hurt most by and vulnerable to the climate emergency and invest heavily in their communities and solutions. It must provide protection from extreme heat, severe weather, high flooding waters, and deadly air pollution. It must support local leadership, and the countless local solutions that are already underway.
- Invest in the training of workers, job placement, and a commitment to good paying jobs. It must fund re-training and income maintenance for displaced workers, so that those who have built the foundation for today's economy aren't hurt by the transition to a new economy.

Declaring a Climate Emergency can make a real difference!

Every country, state, and local government in the world should declare a climate emergency.

The science is clear. We urgently need a massive effort to reverse global warming and protect humanity and the natural world from collapse. The U.S. Congress has a special responsibility to declare a national climate emergency in order to mobilize an emergency response from one of the first and worst greenhouse gas polluters. In doing so, the United States would join more than 750 local, state, and national governments in 16 countries around the world in telling the truth about the climate.

The U.S. Congressional Declaration of Climate Emergency Concurrent Resolution calls for a “national, social, industrial, and economic mobilization of the resources and labor of the United States at a massive scale to halt, reverse, mitigate, and prepare for the consequences of the climate emergency and to restore the climate for future generations.” The Resolution recognizes the need for a “zero emissions economy” that “guarantees good jobs and union wages with quality benefits”, as well as the critical need for a “just and managed phase-out” of oil, gas, and coal in order to “keep fossil fuels in the ground”. This is precisely the urgency and scale of action we need today for the sake of not only our country, but of our entire planet; for not only our species, but for all life as we know it.

As people of faith and spirit, we recognize the profound moral responsibility we hold to get the world on track to a livable future where everyone can not simply survive, but thrive. We support declaring a Climate Emergency at all levels of government, from local councils to national governments to international peacekeeping organizations. We encourage our houses of worship and our religious and spiritual institutions to issue their own declarations. We must raise the alarm of the Climate Emergency and act accordingly—at a tremendous scale and with great urgency.