

# — FAITH — CONNECTIONS —



Right from the very beginning of the Bible, humanity's stance towards God has an effect on the natural world. When the first humans chose to put what they wanted before what God wanted, the peace and **equilibrium of creation is ruptured** (Genesis 3).

In the Hebrew Scriptures (the Old Testament), as the relationship between God and God's people unfolds, conditions in the natural world are seen as a kind of barometer of spiritual wellbeing (e.g. Deuteronomy 28).

This is why the prophet Joel makes the link between an impending invasion of ravenous locusts and the people's unfaithfulness to God, whilst the prophet Isaiah envisages that a healed relationship with God will lead to a world of peace and wellbeing (*shalom*), including a restoration of the natural world (Isaiah 65).

For centuries, theologians have debated how best to understand God's direct involvement in the natural world. But, regardless of any particular theory or theology, one principle remains clear: **what we do, how we live, has an impact on our environment.** Social systems and personal lives that are guided by self-centred values and choices end up being damaging and self-destructive.

Viewed through this lens, today's climate crisis is both an indictment and a wake-up call.

