

# Climate Shabbat Reading

## ***Context:***

*This is a reading provided by the Jewish Climate Network to be read out for the Global Climate Shabbat that Jews all over the world are celebrating today. It is inspired by the first Climate Shabbat instigated by the late Chief Rabbi Jonathan Sacks 14 years ago.*

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In the Midrash, Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai tells the story of a man in a boat who begins to drill a hole under his seat.

His fellow passengers protest: *"What are you doing?!"*

He responds: *"What concern is it of yours? I am making a hole under my seat, not yours."*

**They replied: *"That may be so, but when the water comes in, it will sink the whole boat and we will all drown!"***

This tale illuminates the Jewish view of the connection between all of our lives — how our individual actions deeply affect those around us.

**We are reminded of this important message this Climate Shabbat.**

Our community shares a collective responsibility to do what we can to reduce dangerous emissions and restore the balance of our planet, for ourselves and future generations. Our tradition tells us that the natural world is a precious inheritance *"le-ovdah u-le-shomrah"* - to cultivate and protect.

**This Climate Shabbat, we amplify this calling.**

Thousands of Jews in Australia, Israel and across the world are already playing exciting roles to help solve the climate change challenge. They work in renewable energy, environmental law, critical minerals, policy and advocacy, climate science, and much more. They are regular people like us advocating within their companies and organisations for change.

**But in the words of the current Chief Rabbi of the Commonwealth, we must "rally together in order to continue what we are doing - and to do even more."**

This Shabbat, let us translate intent into action, and words into deeds. Let our Jewish values, ethical compass, creativity and resilience, inspire others to join us in this most urgent and sacred task.

**We affirm today: *The change starts with us.***

Shabbat shalom.

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