

Hebrews 6:7-8

Parched Earth and Merciful Rain...

The picture here is one of rain, and to the Hebrews this addressed, it means the rain in the land of Israel. The word here is <metos> it is a wetting shower, not a drowning one. It falls on the earth, and in Israel, it fell often...For the land of Israel was a land that "drank in the water of heaven"

Deuteronomy 11:10–12 (NKJV)

¹⁰ For the land which you go to possess is not like the land of Egypt from which you have come, where you sowed your seed and watered it by foot, as a vegetable garden; ¹¹ but the land which you cross over to possess is a land of hills and valleys, which drinks water from the rain of heaven, ¹² a land for which the Lord your God cares; the eyes of the Lord your God are always on it, from the beginning of the year to the very end of the year.

Commonly they received two seasons of rain, Joreh - the former rains fell around planting time (October); and Malcosh - the latter rains fell prior to harvest to fill

out the grain. (Usually early March). There were, of course, other timely showers in between, and God would chastise His people by withholding the rain...

In the same way when God denies His word to a people He says there will be no rain.

Amos 8:11–12 (NKJV)

¹¹ “Behold, the days are coming,” says the Lord God, “That I will send a famine on the land, Not a famine of bread, Nor a thirst for water, But of hearing the words of the Lord. ¹² They shall wander from sea to sea, And from north to east; They shall run to and fro, seeking the word of the Lord, But shall not find it.

And thus, the falling of the rain here is actually the proclamation of the word. Preaching. And just like the land is transformed from barren to verdant, We drink it in and it changes us. The rain is to be drunk in, just as it is the natural tendency of earth to drink in the water poured upon it. So also men cannot but take in the truth somewhat, even if all it does is make them guilty before God.

I. MAN IS BORN PARCHED AND BARREN

a. We are spiritually dead

Ephesians 2.1-3

b. We are by nature totally without ability to produce anything that is pleasing...

c. Under the auspices of common grace all we yield is worthless

i. Though a man is wise in the eyes of the world,

ii. Though he is able to unravel mysteries of science or weave webs of beautiful words to snare the mind and heart

iii. Though he is charismatic and winning...

iv. All is empty and without real power or hope.

d. Even though these differences might make one man more likable than another, they have no power to save

e. The key need is the rain. It is nothing in the earth, It is the rain of the word that is needed. it is the power of God communicated to the heart of the one who hears... we need the word, attended by the power of the Spirit to alter our condition

II. THE GIVING OF RAIN IS SOVEREIGN GRACE

- a. There is nothing in nature that is more God's than the giving of rain
- b. Even when it had not yet rained notice the language of the scripture

Genesis 2:5 (NKJV)

before any plant of the field was in the earth and before any herb of the field had grown. For the LORD God had not caused it to rain on the earth, and there was no man to till the ground;

- c. Rain displays His goodness

Acts 14.14-18

Matthew 5:45 (NKJV)

*that you may be sons of your Father in heaven;
for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the
good, and sends rain on the just and on the
unjust.*

d. Rain teaches us to fear God

Jeremiah 5:24 (NKJV)

*They do not say in their heart, "Let us now fear
the LORD our God, Who gives rain, both the
former and the latter, in its season. He reserves
for us the appointed weeks of the harvest."*

e. For He ALONE can bring it

Jeremiah 14:22 (NKJV)

*Are there any among the idols of the nations
that can cause rain? Or can the heavens give
showers? Are You not He, O LORD our God?
Therefore we will wait for You, Since You have
made all these.*

f. He gives it where He will and withholds it
where He will

Amos 4.7-8

- g. In the same manner He gives the rain of His word where and when He will

III. THE RAIN OF THE WORD

- a. He often sends the rain of His word

Hosea 6:3 (NKJV)

Let us know, Let us pursue the knowledge of the LORD. His going forth is established as the morning; He will come to us like the rain, Like the latter and former rain to the earth.

- b. The former rains, And the latter rains and also He gives
- c. The prophets
- d. The preachers
- e. The mere written word...
- f. The ultimate expression, Christ Himself...

g. The Word is preached in season and out of season

IV. THE EFFECTS OF THAT RAIN

a. To save the elect

i. To convert

Romans 9:11 (NKJV)

(for the children not yet being born, nor having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works but of Him who calls),

Romans 11:7 (NKJV)

What then? Israel has not obtained what it seeks; but the elect have obtained it, and the rest were blinded.

ii. To edify

iii. To sanctify those that He has chosen for Himself...

John 17:17 (NKJV)

Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.

- b. Thus, wherever His chosen are, there also will be the Word preached

Acts 18.9-10

- c. For the purpose of God according to election MUST stand

2 Timothy 2:10 (NKJV)

Therefore I endure all things for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.

- d. Thus there is a necessity according to the purpose of God, and though there be only one, God will still send His mercy...

Acts 16.14-15

Micah 5:7 (NKJV)

Then the remnant of Jacob Shall be in the midst of many peoples, Like dew from the Lord, Like showers on the grass, That tarry for no man Nor wait for the sons of men.

- i. This mercy is ubiquitously given. We do not preach only to the elect, but to all men for only God knows who He has called.

Acts 2:47 (NKJV)

praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.

Acts 13:48 (NKJV)

Now when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and glorified the word of the Lord. And as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed.

- e. Other actions of the Word
 - i. Restrains sin
 - ii. Tells us what is right and wrong. - No one need to rely on their own weak understanding or twisted up perceptions to define good and evil. We have the unchanging word of God to show us the truth and help us see the schemes of the evil one.
 - iii. Relieves man's suffering

- iv. Convicts men's consciences and brings some justice
- v. Leaves them all without excuse

V. GOD CALLS MEN TO PREACH

- a. None may unless they are called of God and then they will

Jeremiah 20:9 (NKJV)

*Then I said, "I will not make mention of Him,
Nor speak anymore in His name." But His word
was in my heart like a burning fire Shut up in
my bones; I was weary of holding it back, And I
could not.*

Romans 10.13-15

- b. God gives gifts

Ephesians 4.7-8

- c. The preaching is accompanied with power
- d. Which then changes the world