

*The Weather as  
God's Judgment*

*Earthquakes  
Tornado's  
Rain, eruptions  
wind & seas roaring*

*Compiled by Dr. Harold Bollinger*

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## **Forward**

There are many Scriptures in the Bible that tell how God used the elements of the sky and earth to fight for Israel.

We will see how drought was used as punishment to those who rebelled against God and his people.

### **2 Samuel 22:10-15**

He bowed the heavens also, and came down; and darkness was under his feet. And he rode upon a cherub, and did fly: and he was seen upon the wings of the wind.

And he made darkness pavilions round about him, dark waters, and thick clouds of the skies. Through the brightness before him were coals of fire kindled. The Lord thundered from heaven, and the most High uttered his voice. And he sent out arrows, and scattered them; lightning, and discomfited them.

Many earthly happenings are increasing. This is a sign we are living in the last days. Earthquakes, and most kinds of storms seem to be forever on the increase. Become aware that there is a God in heaven who controls the happenings of the earth.

## Chapter 1



### Weather as God's judgment

#### Joshua 10:11-14

As the Amorites retreated down the road from Beth-horon, the Lord destroyed them with a terrible hailstorm that continued until they reached Azekah. The hail killed more of the enemy than the Israelites killed with the sword.

On the day the Lord gave the Israelites victory over the Amorites, Joshua prayed to the Lord in front of all the people of Israel. He said "Let the sun stand still over Gibeon, and the moon over the valley of Aijalon."

So the sun and moon stood still until the Israelites had defeated their enemies.

Is this event not recorded in The Book of Jashar? The sun stopped in the middle of the sky, and it did not set as on a normal day.

The Lord fought for Israel that day. Never before or since has there been a day like that one, when the Lord answered such a request from a human being.

How did the sun stand still? Of course, in relation to the earth the sun always stands still—it is the earth that travels around the sun. But the

terminology used in Joshua should not cause us to doubt the miracle. After all, we are not confused when someone tells us the sun rises.

The point is that the day was prolonged, not that God used a particular method to prolong it.

Two explanations have been given for how this event occurred:

- (1) A slowing of the earth's normal rotation gave Joshua more time, as the original Hebrew language seems to indicate.
- (2) Some unusual refraction of the sun's rays gave additional hours of light. Regardless of God's chosen method, the Bible is clear that the day was prolonged by a miracle, and that God's intervention turned the tide of battle for his people.

The Book of Jashar (also mentioned in 2 Samuel 1:18) was probably a collection of historical events put to music. Many parts of the Bible contain quotations from previous books, songs, poems, or other spoken and written materials. Because God guided the writer of this book to select this material, his message comes with divine authority.

## **Signs in the heavens**

### **2 Samuel 22:10-15**

He bowed the heavens also, and came down; and darkness was under his feet. And he rode upon a cherub, and did fly: and he was seen upon the wings of the wind.

And he made darkness pavilions round about him, dark waters, and thick clouds of the skies. Through the brightness before him were coals of fire kindled. The Lord thundered from heaven, and the most High uttered his voice. And he sent out arrows, and scattered them; lightning, and discomfited them.

### **Fire, cloudburst, downpour and hailstones**

#### **Isaiah 30:30**

And the LORD will cause His voice of authority to be heard, And the descending of His arm to be seen in fierce anger, And in the flame of a consuming fire in cloudburst, downpour and hailstones.

It was wrong for Judah to look to other nations for military help.

- (1) They were trusting in human beings instead of God. Judah sought protection from those who had far less power than God. Both Egypt and Judah would fall as a result of their arrogance.
- (2) They were serving their own interests instead of God's, and thus they did not even consult him. They violated God's stipulation in Deut. 17:16.

- (3) They did not want to pay the price of looking to God and repenting of their sinful ways. When we have problems, it is good to seek help, but we must never bypass

### **A torrential rain with hailstones**

#### **Ezekiel 38:22**

"With pestilence and with blood I will enter into judgment with him; and I will rain on him and on his troops, and on the many peoples who are with him, a torrential rain, with hailstones, fire and brimstone.

God will directly intervene in the defense of Israel, unleashing severe natural disasters on the invaders from the north. In the end, the stricken pagan nations will turn on themselves in confusion and panic. All those who set themselves against God will be destroyed.

### **No dew, nor rain for these years except by my word**

#### **1 Kings 17:1**

Now Elijah the Tishbite, who was of the settlers of Gilead, said to Ahab, "As the LORD, the God of Israel lives, before whom I stand, surely there shall be neither dew nor rain these years, except by my word."

Elijah was the first in a long line of important prophets God sent to Israel and Judah. Israel, the northern kingdom, had no faithful kings

throughout its history. Each king was wicked, actually leading the people in worshiping pagan gods.

There were few priests left from the tribe of Levi (most had gone to Judah), and the priests appointed by Israel's kings were corrupt and ineffective. With no king or priests to bring God's word to the people, God called prophets to try to rescue Israel from its moral and spiritual decline. For the next 300 years these men and women would play vital roles in both nations, encouraging the people and leaders to turn back to God.

Those who worshiped Baal believed he was the god who brought the rains and bountiful harvests. So when Elijah walked into the presence of this Baal-worshiping king and told him there would be no rain for several years, Ahab was shocked.

Ahab had built a strong military defense, but it would be no help against drought. He had many priests of Baal, but they could not bring rain. Elijah bravely confronted the man who led his people into evil, and he told of a power far greater than any pagan god—the Lord God of Israel.

When rebellion and heresy were at an all-time high in Israel, God responded not only with words but also with action.

### **The earth withheld its produce**

#### **Haggai 1:10-11**

"Therefore, because of you the sky has withheld its dew and the earth has withheld its produce. "I called for a drought on the land, on the mountains, on the grain, on the new wine, on the oil, on what the ground produces, on men, on cattle, and on all the labor of your hands."

Judah's problem was confused priorities. Like Judah, our priorities involving occupation, family, and God's work are often confused. Jobs, homes, vacations, and leisure activities may rank higher on our list of importance than God. What is most important to you? Where is God on your list of priorities?

Grain, grapes for wine, and olives for oil were Israel's major crops. The people depended on these for security while neglecting the worship of God. As a result, God would send a drought to destroy their livelihood and call them back to himself.

People began rebuilding the temple just 23 days after Haggai's first message. Rarely did a prophet's message produce such a quick response. How often we hear a sermon and respond, "That was an excellent point—I ought to do that," only to leave church and forget to act. These people put their words into action.

**The rain fell upon the earth for forty days and forty nights.**

### **Genesis 7:11-12**

In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month, on the same day all the fountains of the great deep burst open, and the floodgates of the sky were opened. The rain fell upon the earth for forty days and forty nights.

Many have wondered how this animal kingdom roundup happened. Did Noah and his sons spend years collecting all the animals? In reality the creation, along with Noah, was doing just as God had commanded. There seemed to be no problem gathering the animals—God took care of the details of that job while Noah was doing his part by building the ark.

Often we do just the opposite of Noah. We worry about details over which we have no control, while neglecting specific areas (such as attitudes, relationships, responsibilities) that *are* under our control. Like Noah, concentrate on what God has given you to do, and leave the rest to God.

## Chapter 2



### **Thunder, and hail in all the land of Egypt**

#### **Exodus 9:22-26**

And the Lord said unto Moses, Stretch forth thine hand toward heaven, that there may be hail in all the land of Egypt, upon man, and upon beast, and upon every herb of the field, throughout the land of Egypt. [23] And Moses stretched forth his rod toward heaven: and the Lord sent thunder and hail, and the fire ran along upon the ground; and the Lord rained hail upon the land of Egypt.

So there was hail, and fire mingled with the hail, very grievous, such as there was none like it in all the land of Egypt since it became a nation.

And the hail smote throughout all the land of Egypt all that was in the field, both man and beast; and the hail smote every herb of the field, and brake every tree of the field.

Only in the land of Goshen, where the children of Israel were, was there no hail.

**The sky will be like iron, and the earth like brass.**

#### **Leviticus 26:18-19**

'If also after these things you do not obey me, then I will punish you seven times more for your sins. 'I will also break down your pride of power; I will also make your sky like iron and your earth like bronze.

If the Israelites obeyed, there would be peace in the land. If they disobeyed, disaster would follow. God used sin's consequences to draw them to repentance, not to get back at them. Today, sin's consequences are not always so apparent. When calamity strikes us we may not know the reason. It may be (1) the result of our own disobedience, (2) the result of someone else's sin, (3) the result of natural disaster. Because we don't know, we should search our hearts and be sure we are at peace with God. His Spirit, like a great searchlight, will reveal those areas we need to deal with. Because calamity is not always the result of wrongdoing, we must guard against assigning or accepting blame for every tragedy we encounter. Misplaced guilt is one of Satan's favorite weapons against believers.

### **God will shut up the heavens.**

#### **Deuteronomy 11:17**

"Or the anger of the LORD will be kindled against you, and He will shut up the heavens so that there will be no rain and the ground will not yield its fruit; and you will perish quickly from the good land which the LORD is giving you.

Israel had strong reasons to believe in God and obey his commands. They had witnessed a parade of mighty miracles that demonstrated

God's love and care for them. Incredibly, they still had trouble remaining faithful. Because few of us have seen such dramatic miracles, it may seem even more difficult for us to obey God and remain faithful. But we have the Bible, the written record of God's acts throughout history.

Reading God's Word gives us a panoramic view of both the miracles Israel saw and others they didn't see. The lessons from the past, the instructions for the present, and the glimpses into the future give us many opportunities to strengthen our faith in God.

### **Smitten with fiery heat and mildew**

#### **Deuteronomy 28:22-24**

"The LORD will smite you with consumption and with fever and with inflammation and with fiery heat and with the sword and with blight and with mildew, and they will pursue you until you perish. "The heaven, which is over your head, shall be bronze, and the earth which is under you, iron. "The LORD will make the rain of your land powder and dust; from heaven it shall come down on you until you are destroyed.

This severe warning tragically came true when Israel was defeated and carried away into captivity by Assyria (722 B.C.), and Judah to Babylonia (586 B.C.). Later, in A.D. 70, Roman oppression forced many Jews to flee their homeland. Thus the people were dispersed throughout the various nations.

## **The showers have been withheld.**

### **Jeremiah 3:3**

"Therefore the showers have been withheld, and there has been no spring rain yet you had a harlot's forehead; you refused to be ashamed.

In this section, the marriage analogy sharply contrasts God's love for his people with their love for other gods and reveals Judah's faithlessness. Jeremiah condemned Judah (he sometimes called Judah "Jerusalem," the name of its capital city) for seeking security in worthless, changeable things rather than the unchangeable God.

We may be tempted to seek security from possessions, people, or our own abilities, but these will fail us. There is no lasting security apart from the eternal God.

## **The dearth is black unto the ground**

### **Jeremiah 14:1-6**

The word of the Lord that came to Jeremiah concerning the dearth. Judah mourneth, and the gates thereof languish; they are black unto the ground; and the cry of Jerusalem is gone up.

And their nobles have sent their little ones to the waters: they came to the pits, and found no water; they returned with their vessels empty; they were ashamed and confounded, and covered their heads.

Because the ground is chapped, for there was no rain in the earth, the plowmen were ashamed, they covered their heads. [5] Yea, the hind also calved in the field, and forsook it, because there was no grass. [6] And the wild asses did stand in the high places, they snuffed up the wind like dragons; their eyes did fail, because there was no grass.

Drought was a judgment with devastating consequences. As usual, when their backs were to the wall, the people cried out to God. But God rejected their plea because they did not repent; they merely wanted his rescue. Not even Jeremiah's prayers would help. Their only hope was to turn to God.

## Chapter 3



### **A land not cleansed in the day of indignation**

#### **Ezekiel 22:24**

"Son of man, say to her, 'You are a land that is not cleansed or rained on in the day of indignation.'

The priests were supposed to keep God's worship pure and teach the people right living. But the worship of God had become commonplace to them; they ignored the Sabbath, and they refused to teach the people.

They no longer carried out their God-given duties (Leviticus 10:10-11; Ezekiel 44:23).

When doing God's work becomes no more important than any mundane task, we are no longer giving God the reverence he deserves. Instead of bringing God down to our level, we should live up to his level.

### **The rain is withheld until harvest.**

#### **Amos 4:7**

"Furthermore, I withheld the rain from you while there were still three months until harvest then I would send rain on one city and on another city I would not send rain; one part would be rained on, while the part not rained on would dry up.

No matter how God warned the people—through famine, drought, blight, locusts, plagues, or war—they still ignored him. Because the Israelites didn't get the message, they would have to meet God face to face in judgment.

No longer would they ignore God; they would have to face the One they had rejected, the One they had refused to obey when he commanded them to care for the poor. One day each of us will meet God face to face to account for what we have done or refused to do. Are you prepared to meet him?

**No rain when families do not go up to Jerusalem.**

### **Zechariah 14:17-19**

And it will be that whichever of the families of the earth does not go up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, there will be no rain on them. If the family of Egypt does not go up or enter, then no rain will fall on them; it will be the plague with which the LORD smites the nations who do not go up to celebrate the Feast of Booths. This will be the punishment of Egypt, and the punishment of all the nations who do not go up to celebrate the Feast of Booths.

This chapter portrays the eventual triumph of the Messiah over all the earth and his reign over God's people. But the chronological order of these future events is not clear. They show that God has various ways

of dealing with his people. Now we are to watch as the events unfold and God provides an escape for his people.

## **You are as a vapor that appears for a little while**

### **James 4:14**

Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away.

Life is short no matter how many years we live. Don't be deceived into thinking that you have lots of remaining time to live for Christ, to enjoy your loved ones, or to do what you know you should. Live for God today! Then, no matter when your life ends, you will have fulfilled God's plan for you.

## **A cloud will soon vanish.**

### **Job 7:9**

"When a cloud vanishes, it is gone, so he who goes down to Sheol does not come up.

Job felt deep anguish and bitterness, and he spoke honestly to God about his feelings to let out his frustrations. If we express our feelings to God, we can deal with them without exploding in harsh words and actions, possibly hurting others and ourselves.

The next time strong emotions threaten to overwhelm you, express them openly to God in prayer. This will help you gain an eternal perspective on the situation and give you greater ability to deal with it constructively.

### **Drought and heat consume the snow waters**

#### **Job 24:19**

"Drought and heat consume the snow waters, so does Sheol those who have sinned.

Job suddenly seemed to be arguing on his friends' side. For this reason, some commentators think one of Job's friends said these words. But we shouldn't expect Job to present a unified argument. He was confused.

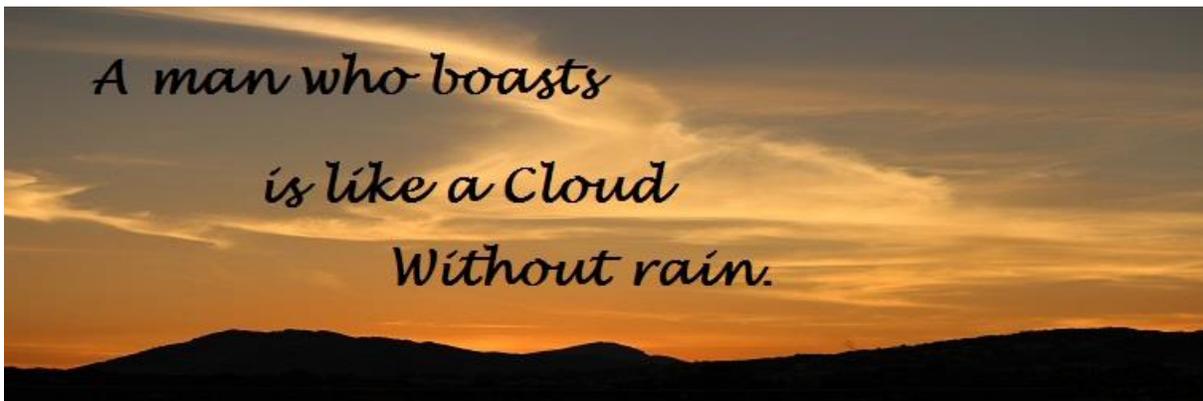
He was not arguing that, in every case, God rewards the wicked and punishes the righteous; he was simply asserting that in his case, a righteous man was suffering.

### **The wind and my prosperity have passed away.**

#### **Job 30:15**

"Terrors are turned against me; they pursue my honor as the wind, and my prosperity has passed away like a cloud.

## Chapter 4



**Like a cloud without rain a man will boast of his gifts**

### **Proverbs 25:14**

Clouds and wind without rain is like a man who boasts of his gifts falsely.

Most churches, missions organizations, and Christian groups depend on the gifts of people to keep their ministries going. But many who promise to give fail to follow through. The Bible is very clear about the effect this has on those involved in the ministry. If you make a pledge, keep your promise.

**The cloud and dew will soon disappear.**

### **Hosea 13:3**

Therefore they will be like the morning cloud and like dew which soon disappears, like chaff which is blown away from the threshing floor and like smoke from a chimney.

When abundant possessions made Israel feel self-sufficient, it turned its back on God and forgot him. Self-sufficiency is as destructive today as it was in Hosea's time. Do you see your constant need of God's presence and help? Learn to rely on God both in good times and bad. If you are traveling along a smooth and easy path right now, beware of forgetting who gave you your good fortune. Don't depend on your gifts; depend on the Giver. See Deut. 6:10-12 and Deut. 8:7-20 for God's warning.

**The beauty of the earth will disappear.**

### **James 1:11**

For the sun rises with a scorching wind and withers the grass; and its flower falls off and the beauty of its appearance is destroyed; so too the rich man in the midst of his pursuits will fade away.

The poor should be glad that riches mean nothing to God; otherwise these people would be considered unworthy. The rich should be glad that money means nothing to God, because money is easily lost. We find true wealth by developing our spiritual life, not by developing our financial assets.

God is interested in what is lasting (our souls), not in what is temporary (our money and possessions). See Mark 4:18-19 for Jesus' words on this subject. Strive to treat each person as Christ would treat him or her.

If wealth, power, and status mean nothing to God, why do we attribute so much importance to them and so much honor to those who possess them?

Do your material possessions give you goals and your only reason for living? If they were gone, what would be left? What you have in your heart, not your bank account, matters to God and endures for eternity.

### **Your loyalty is like a morning cloud**

#### **Hosea 6:4**

What shall I do with you, O Ephraim? What shall I do with you, O Judah? For your loyalty is like a morning cloud and like the dew which goes away early.

God answered his people, pointing out that their profession of loyalty, like mist and dew, evaporated easily and had no substance. Many find it easy and comfortable to maintain the appearance of being committed without deep and sincere loyalty. If you profess loyalty to God, back it up with your actions.

**When they become waterless, they are silent.**

## **Job 6:15-17**

"My brothers have acted deceitfully like a wadi, like the torrents of wadis which vanish, which are turbid because of ice and into which the snow melts. "When they become waterless, they are silent, when it is hot, they vanish from their place.

### **They are springs without water**

## **2 Peter 2:17**

These are springs without water and mists driven by a storm, for whom the black darkness has been reserved.

A person is a slave to whatever controls him or her. Many believe that freedom means doing anything we want. But no one is ever completely free in that sense. If we refuse to follow God, we will follow our own sinful desires and become enslaved to what our bodies want. If we submit our lives to Christ, he will free us from slavery to sin. Christ frees us to serve him, a freedom that results in our ultimate good.

## Chapter 5



**The storms of the Lord will go forth with wrath.**

### **Jeremiah 23:19**

"Behold, the storm of the LORD has gone forth in wrath, Even a whirling tempest; It will swirl down on the head of the wicked.

"In days to come you will understand it clearly" means that the people would see the truth of this prophecy when Jerusalem fell.

**A wind, not to winnow or to cleanse**

### **Jeremiah 4:11**

In that time it will be said to this people and to Jerusalem, "A scorching wind from the bare heights in the wilderness in the direction of the daughter of my people--not to winnow and not to cleanse.

The northern kingdom, Israel, had fallen to Assyria, and its people had been taken into captivity. The tragic lesson of their fall should have

caused the southern kingdom, Judah, to return to God, but Judah paid no attention. Jeremiah urged Judah to return to God to avoid certain disaster.

This message came between 627 and 621 B.C., during Josiah's reign. Although Josiah obeyed God's commands, his example apparently did not penetrate the hearts of the people. If the people refused to repent, God said he would destroy the nation because of the evils of Josiah's grandfather, King Manasseh (2 Kings 23:25-27).

### **They sow to the wind and reap a whirlwind.**

#### **Hosea 8:7**

For they sow the wind and they reap the whirlwind the standing grain has no heads; it yields no grain. Should it yield, strangers would swallow it up.

Crop yield is the result of good seed planted in good soil and given the proper proportions of sunlight, moisture, and fertilizer. A single seed can produce multiple fruit in good conditions. Israel, however, had sown its spiritual seed to the wind—it had invested itself in activities without substance.

Like the wind that comes and goes, its idolatry and foreign alliances offered no protection. In seeking self-preservation apart from God, it had brought about its own destruction. Like a forceful whirlwind, God's judgment would come upon Israel by means of the Assyrians.

When we seek security in anything except God, we expose ourselves to great danger. Without God there is no lasting security.

**My word will be as the snow and rain watering the earth.**

### **Isaiah 55:10-11**

"For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, And do not return there without watering the earth And making it bear and sprout, And furnishing seed to the sower and bread to the eater; So will My word be which goes forth from My mouth; It will not return to Me empty, Without accomplishing what I desire, And without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it.

The people of Israel were foolish to act as if they knew what God was thinking and planning. His knowledge and wisdom are far greater than man's. We are foolish to try to fit God into our mold—to make his plans and purposes conform to ours. Instead, we must strive to fit into *his* plans.

**Your transgression are wipe out like a thick cloud.**

### **Isaiah 44:22**

"I have wiped out your transgressions like a thick cloud and your sins like a heavy mist Return to Me, for I have redeemed you."

God said that we should serve our Creator (Isaiah 17:7; Isaiah 40:28; Isaiah 43:15; Isaiah 45:9). Idolaters do the opposite—serving or worshiping what they have made rather than the one who made them.

Our Creator paid the price to set us free from our sins against him. By contrast, no idol ever created anybody, and no idol can redeem us from our sins.

**Let the earth open up and salvation bear fruit.**

### **Isaiah 45:8**

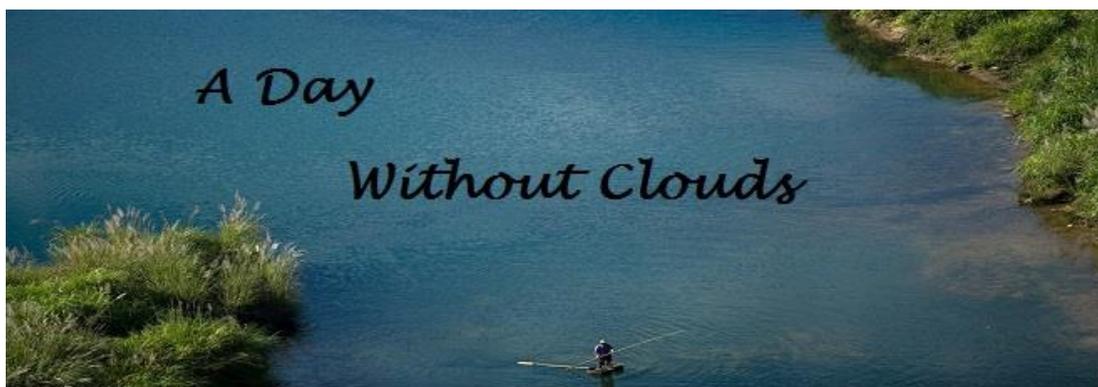
"Drip down, O heavens, from above, And let the clouds pour down righteousness; Let the earth open up and salvation bear fruit, And righteousness spring up with it. I, the LORD, have created it.

This is the only place in the Bible where a Gentile ruler is said to be "anointed." God is the power over all powers, and he anoints whom he chooses for his special tasks. Cyrus's kingdom spread across 2,000 miles (the largest of any empire then known), including the territories of both the Assyrian and the Babylonian empires.

Why did God anoint Cyrus?

Because God had a special task for him to do for Israel. Cyrus would allow God's city, Jerusalem, to be rebuilt, and he would set the exiles free without expecting anything in return. Few kings of Israel or Judah had done as much for God's people as Cyrus would.

## Chapter 6



### **A day without clouds**

#### **2 Samuel 23:3-4**

"The God of Israel said, The Rock of Israel spoke to me, 'He who rules over men righteously, Who rules in the fear of God, Is as the light of the morning when the sun rises, A morning without clouds, When the tender grass springs out of the earth, Through sunshine after rain.'

In the style of a prophet, David spoke of a just and righteous ruler. This will be fulfilled in Jesus Christ when he returns to rule in perfect justice and peace

**May he come down like shows that water the earth.**

#### **Psalm 72:6**

May he come down like rain upon the mown grass, like showers that water the earth.

What qualities do we want most in our leaders? God desires all who rule under him to be righteous and just. Think how the world would change if world leaders would commit

**His favor is like a cloud with spring rain.**

### **Proverbs 16:15**

In the light of a king's face is life, and his favor is like a cloud with the spring rain.

**God is a refuge from the storm.**

### **Isaiah 25:4-5**

For you have been a defense for the helpless, a defense for the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm, a shade from the heat; for the breath of the ruthless is like a rainstorm against a wall. Like heat in drought, you subdue the uproar of aliens; like heat by the shadow of a cloud, the song of the ruthless is silenced.

The poor suffered because ruthless people oppressed them. But God is concerned for the poor and is a refuge for them. When we are disadvantaged or oppressed, we can turn to God for comfort and help. Jesus states that the kingdom of God belongs to the poor (Luke 6:20).

**Let my teaching drop as rain.**

**Deuteronomy 32:2**

"Let my teaching drop as the rain, my speech distill as the dew, as the droplets on the fresh grass and as the showers on the herb.

Moses was not only a great prophet but also a song leader. After three sermons, he changed the form of his message to singing. Sometimes reciting something in a different form makes it easier to remember. This song gives a brief history of Israel.

It reminds the people of their mistakes, warns them to avoid repetition of those mistakes, and offers the hope that comes only in trusting God.

**They waited for me as the spring rain.**

**Job 29:23**

"They waited for me as for the rain, and opened their mouth as for the spring rain.

## **The wind and rain cannot make your house fall.**

### **Matthew 7:24-27**

“Anyone who listens to my teaching and obeys me is wise, like a person who builds a house on solid rock.

Though the rain comes in torrents and the floodwaters rise and the winds beat against that house, it won't collapse, because it is built on rock.

But anyone who hears my teaching and ignores it is foolish, like a person who builds a house on sand. When the rains and floods come and the winds beat against that house, it will fall with a mighty crash.”

To build “on the rock” means to be a hearing, responding disciple, not a phony, superficial one. Practicing obedience becomes the solid foundation to weather the storms of life

## **You can discern the sky, but not the signs of the times.**

### **Matthew 16:2-3**

But He replied to them, "When it is evening, you say, 'it will be fair weather, for the sky is red.' "And in the morning, 'There will be a storm today, for the sky is red and threatening.' Do you know how to discern the appearance of the sky, but cannot discern the signs of the times?"

Many people, like these Jewish leaders, say they want to see a miracle so that they can believe. But Jesus knew that miracles never convince the

skeptical. Jesus had been healing, raising people from the dead, and feeding thousands, and still people wanted him to prove himself

**You can analyze the sky, but not the present time.**

### **Luke 12:54-56**

And He was also saying to the crowds, "When you see a cloud rising in the west, immediately you say, 'A shower is coming,' and so it turns out." And when you see a south wind blowing, you say, 'It will be a hot day,' and it turns out that way. "You hypocrites! You know how to analyze the appearance of the earth and the sky, but why do you not analyze this present time?"

For most of recorded history, the world's principal occupation was farming. The farmer depended directly on the weather for his livelihood. He needed just the right amounts of sun and rain—not too much, not too little—to make his living, and he grew skilled at interpreting natural signs.

Jesus was announcing an earthshaking event that would be much more important than the year's crops—the coming of God's kingdom. Like a rainstorm or a sunny day, there were signs that the kingdom would soon arrive. But Jesus' hearers, though skilled at interpreting weather signs, were intentionally ignoring the signs of the times.

**To ask Jesus to come into your heart please pray this Prayer:**

Dear Lord Jesus, I believe you are the Christ, the Son of the Living God.  
I ask you to forgive me of my sins and coming into my heart. I  
accept you as savior and will follow you as Lord. Amen.

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