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Some of God's ways in the weather are for blessing and bounty, some are part of His judgment on nations, and some are simply the consequences of living on a fallen earth with a fallen weather system. All will one day be made new. Until then, we must deal with weather as it is, knowing that God uses the weather to refresh, to restore, to rebuke, to reveal Himself in some way, and to bring us to reflection, even to repentance. Sunny days and stormy days are all meant to bring us to a new level of trust and a fuller knowledge of Him as our loving and holy God and Father.

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Praying... About the Weather



*God's Word about the Weather
God's Work through the Weather
God's Will in the Weather*

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Weather-related natural disasters face every part of the planet at some time or another—Snow storms, ice storms, thunder storms, floods, hurricanes, tornadoes, droughts and wildfires all come with varied strength and impact. How should you face these? What does the Scripture reveal? What is God's Word on the Weather? We find several incidences and insights throughout the Scripture. As we look through these Scriptures, we find we have much to learn from the weather, especially from the ways of God in the weather.

Job 36:22-23 and 37:1-24 give us clear revelation about the weather. God moves the winds that move the weather. **What** and **Why** and **How** does He do all this. The Scriptures show us.

I. WHAT Does the Lord Do Through the Weather?

Three truths are found in Job 36 and 37. Everything in the weather fits at least one of three categories...

- Maintenance of the Earth
- Mercy on the Earth
- Measure of Judgment on the Earth (Job 37:13)



1. Through the Weather God provides **His Maintenance on the Earth**— “for His land” (NKJV) or “for His world” (NASB) (Job 37:13)

Job 36:26, 27-29, 31—“Behold, God is great...For He draws up the drops of water, which distill as rain from the mist, which the clouds drop down and pour abundantly on man. Indeed, can anyone understand the spreading of the clouds, the thunder from His canopy?,,For by these...He gives food in abundance.” (NKJV)

Matthew 5:45—Jesus said, “He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and the unjust (NKJV) Note it is “His sun” to direct as He pleases.

Sometimes, in the midst of weather related situations, whether in calamity or in blessing, God opens a door to pray for or help another. Often He provides an opportunity to help one connect with God in the midst of a time of need. A temporal loss can lead to eternal gain.

Pause and pray for Others facing needs. Pray that they would be open to God's Word and God's work in their lives. For those who do not know Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, the weather can be a wake-up call to count their days, realizing that time on earth is not all there is—an eternity awaits all, either in heaven or hell. He sometimes uses the weather as the vehicle to call one of His children home. For the one who does yet know Jesus as Lord and Savior, **today's weather** may be an opportunity to turn to Jesus in repentance and faith, to know the fullness of life and salvation only He can give. God uses many things to call us to Himself, including the weather.



***Pause and pray
for
OTHERS
facing needs.***

In addition to looking to our Father for His wisdom, we should be open to the fact that He may be **dealing with us about some sin**. Or He may be **dealing with us about priorities in life**. In the face of any trial, which includes any weather related situation, we should call to Him, open to any rebuke or correction that may be needed in our lives. One man whose house was destroyed in Hurricane Ivan stated, “I think I worshiped it [the house] too much. I think that’s why God took it away from us.” (“*Forever Changed by Ivan*,” by Charisse Jones in *USA Today*, October 11, 2004). Another man declared he would take the insurance money from his demolished house “and do good with it—whatever that might be.” (“*Religious Experience*,” *The Orlando Sentinel*, September 17, 2004).

Any sin God reveals should be properly dealt with whether in confession of sin to Him, in restitution to someone else, or in restoration of a relationship. Then, you can walk with Him in true worship unhindered by that sin and unfettered by the bondage of any bitterness, by any broken relationship, or by any bent-out-of-shape priority.



A sign on Sand Lake Road in Orlando uncovered by Hurricane Charley’s 100-mile-per-hour winds, August, 2004.

Pause and Talk to God if He is dealing with you about some sin or about some needed changes in priorities. God understands your situation far better than you do. Trust him and obey His Word. Talk to Him, telling Him all that is on your heart.

Acts 14:15, 17—To those at Lystra, Paul said, “*The living God...did not leave Himself without witness, in that He did good and gave you rains from heaven and fruitful seasons, satisfying your hearts with food and gladness.*” (NASB)

Acts 17:25—To those at Athens Paul said, “*He gives to all life, breath and all things.*”

2. Through the Weather God reveals **His Mercy on the Earth**—“*for mercy*” (NKJV) or “*for lovingkindness*” (NASB) (Job 37:13)

Genesis 41-50—God allowed a famine to strike Egypt and the Middle East, but He had already sent Joseph there to protect His people. Joseph told his brothers that “*God sent me before you to preserve life...to preserve for you a remnant in the earth, and to keep you alive by a great deliverance*” (Genesis 45:5, 7)

Ruth 1-4—God allowed a famine in the land of Israel that drove Elimelech, Naomi, and their two sons into Moab to find food. There one of the sons married Ruth, a Moabitess. That son later died along with his brother and their father Elimelech. Then, Naomi and Ruth came back to Bethlehem because “*the LORD had visited His people in giving them food.*” (Ruth 1:6) Ruth became a part of the people of God. In Bethlehem she would meet Boaz, marry and become the mother of Obed, grandmother of Jesse, great-grandmother of King David, and one of those in the genealogy of Jesus (Matthew 1:5).

Jonah 1—When God called Jonah to go to Ninevah, he ran the opposite direction. God appointed “*a great wind*” and “*a great storm*” (1:4) to deal with disobedient Jonah, that he might bring a message of judgment to Ninevah, a message that could be a message of mercy, if they repented (Jonah 3:4-10). In the storm the sailors cried out, “*Thou, O LORD, hast done as Thou hast pleased*” (1:14). The storm was a moment of mercy for the sailors who, when God miraculously stilled the seas, “*feared the Lord greatly, and they offered a sacrifice to the LORD and made vows.*” When Jonah came to Ninevah and saw their repentance, he acknowledged a truth. It was possible for God’s message of judgment to be turned to mercy where there is repentance.

“I knew that Thou art a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness, and one who relents concerning calamity” (Jonah 4:2). God Himself spoke of having *“compassion on Ninevah”* (Jonah 4:11).

Acts 27—God sent a hurricane-like “northeaster” into the Mediterranean, causing Paul and 275 others on-board ship to be driven for fourteen days before crashing on the island of Malta. *“They all were brought safely to land”* (Acts 27:44). All aboard heard Paul’s clear testimony of God’s promised protection. Then, on the island of Malta several were healed and many came to faith in Christ. The storm was a show of mercy on Malta as well as for those on board ship.

3. Through the Weather God gives a **Measure of Judgment on Earth**—*“for correction,”* literally, *“for the rod”* (NKJV, NASB) (Job 37:13). Consider these Scriptures.

Job 36:31—Speaking of the rains, clouds, lightning, and thunder, Elihu states, *“For by these He judges the peoples,”* the nations of the earth.

Genesis 6:17—God brought the floodwaters on the earth in Noah’s day as an act of judgment on all except Noah and his family and the creatures in the Ark.

Psalms 29:10—*“The LORD sat as King at the flood; Yes, the LORD sits as King forever.”* 2 Peter 2:5—God *“did not spare the ancient world, but preserved Noah, a preacher of righteousness, with seven others, when He brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly.”* (NASB)

Exodus 7-11—God used a variety of plagues, some weather-related, to judge the gods of Egypt (Exodus 12:12). *“The Lord had also executed judgments on their gods”* (Numbers 33:4). He also worked to accomplish His purposes in releasing His people from Egyptian bondage in order to bring them back to the Promised Land.



What Should Be My Response to the Weather?

How should we respond to these truths about the weather, God’s instrument of blessing, trial, training, and judgment?

Everything in God’s Creation, including weather, good or bad, rough or smooth, sunny or stormy is meant to bring us to honor God as God and give Him thanks. Creation is our tutor to bring us to wonder and awe, to humility and gratitude, to trust and obedience. As with any blessing, we should immediately acknowledge the good gifts of God with praise and thanksgiving. That is the consistent testimony of God’s people throughout the Scriptures. For His maintenance of the earth and His show of mercy we can offer thanksgiving to our loving Heavenly Father.



Pause and offer to God Praise and Thanksgiving for His blessings to you, including those related to His provision and protection through the weather. Thank Him for those trying times as well.

In any trial or training time, we should acknowledge our all-powerful, all-knowing Father who does all things for His glory and our ultimate benefit. Even His scourging is so that *“we may share His holiness”* and discover the *“peaceful fruit of righteousness”* (Hebrews 12:10, 11). James 1:2-5, commands us to look to Him and **ask for wisdom** in any trial. He is a Father who has compassion on His children who walk in the fear of Him (Psalm 103:13-14). Even when we face His “correction” we can call on Him in praise. As the psalmist cried, *“It is good for me that I was afflicted, that I may learn Thy statutes... I know, O Lord, that Thy judgments are righteous, and that in faithfulness Thou hast afflicted me”* (Psalm 119:71, 75).

By faith, praise and thank the Father for the trial He has allowed in your life.

While God was dealing with His people in judgment in Jeremiah 14-15, Jeremiah's cry in 14:22 reflects the truth about God's control over the rain. It also shows us the attitude of heart we must have. Knowing it is the Lord who gives rain and provision, we look to and pray to the Lord.

Always the Lord is most concerned for the eternal needs of man. He wants us to know the refreshing rain of His Life, the Living Water Jesus promised.

In times of physical and material difficulties, the Lord often uses the difficulties associated with storms, floods, fires, or drought to get the attention of men and women and call them to Himself. He wants each to get right with Him and discover His provision for the greater spiritual need. He did this with His people Israel time after time. Throughout the history of the church, we have seen Him use calamities to bring people to Himself. His praise rises from millions who have found His ways higher than our ways and His thoughts higher than our thoughts. May each of us call on Him to send His provision and to pour out His Spirit in the salvation of multitudes that need the "wind" of His Spirit and the "rain" of His salvation.

If **Jesus is calling you** to receive Him as Lord and Savior, **pray to Him now** from your heart. Here is a prayer that can help guide you.

"**Lord Jesus**, I admit my need of You and my need of Your forgiveness. I acknowledge my sin and turn from it. I believe You died on the Cross and rose from the dead to pay for my sin. I now receive You into my life as Lord and Savior. I give you my life. Make me what You want me to be. Thank You for saving me and giving me Your eternal life. Amen."

*He wants us to
know the
refreshing rain
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the Living
Water ...*

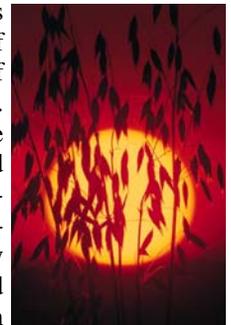


1 Kings 17:1; 18:1; James 5:17—Through Elijah, God ceased the dew and the rains for three and a half years because of Ahab's idolatry. Ahab called Elijah the "troubler of Israel" to which Elijah responded, "*I have not troubled Israel, but you and your father's house have, because you have forsaken the commandments of the LORD, and you have followed the Baals.*" (18:17-18). When the people once again honored the LORD as God and Elijah prayed, the Lord responded, "*the sky poured rain, and the earth produced its fruit*" (James 5:18).

2 Kings 8:1-3—Warning a widow to prepare, Elisha does not give the reason, but simply declared, "*The LORD has called for a famine and it shall even come on the land for seven years.*" In judgment, the Lord brought the famine. In mercy, he warned the widow and her son to go to a place of provision.

1 Kings 8:35 speaks of God calling for a drought on the land of Israel because of the sin of the people.

The Prophets—In Jeremiah 50:38, we see God's judgment in calling for a drought on the nation of Babylon. Amos 4:7 and Zechariah 10:1 speak of God's use of the rain in dealing with His people. In Haggai 1-2, God called for a drought on the land of Israel (1:11). God used a drought and other weather-related difficulties to get the attention of His people because they were not following His priorities in rebuilding the Temple. They had stopped rebuilding because of opposition and focused only on their own personal needs. When they obeyed, the rains came.



Any judgment through the weather is temporary. His full judgment awaits the Day of Judgment (2 Peter 3:7). Jesus used an illustration from the weather as a call to obedience and a warning of judgment for failure to obey His words, "*and everyone who hears these words of Mine, and does not act upon them will be like a foolish man, who built his house upon the sand. And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and burst against that house; and it fell, and great was its fall*" (Matthew 7:26-27).

II. WHY Does God Direct the Weather the Way He Does?

1. **Weather is for Worship**—to reveal Himself, His ways, and the multitude of His attributes, all worthy of worship, praise, and thanks.

Psalm 65 speaks of praise to God for hearing prayer, for forgiving sin, for stilling the storm, and for taking care of the earth. *“Thou dost greatly enrich it.”* Psalm 104 praises the Lord for His provision. He *“waters the hills”* and *“the earth is satisfied with the fruit of His works”* (104:13).

When Job faced the death of his ten children from *“a great wind”* destroying the house they were in as well as the loss of many of his possessions from other calamities, Job *“worshiped”* the Lord (1:18-20). He said, *“The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away. Blessed be the name of the LORD”* (1:21).

When the sailors on board ship with Jonah saw what God had done, they worshiped the Lord (Jonah 1).



Matthew 8:18, 23-27 records how the disciples and Jesus were in *“a great storm in the sea.”* In Mark 4:38, we read that the disciples questioned Jesus’ care in the midst of the waves and the storm. Jesus *“rebuked the wind and said to the sea, ‘Hush, be still’* and all became calm to the astonishment of the disciples. Matthew 14:22-33 records another storm on the Sea of Galilee and how Jesus stilled it. When the disciples saw all this, they *“worshiped Him, saying, ‘You are certainly God’s Son’* (14:33).

2. **Weather is for Witness**—to bring people to Himself, to know Him as personal Lord, God, and Savior

The storm of Jonah 1:4 was a witness to the sailors and the turning point in their lives. It was also the turning point for Jonah to become a witness to the Ninevites (Jonah 1-4). He delivered Jonah, the sailors and those in Ninevah so they could know Him.

A Word about Prayer and the Weather

In several of the situations in Scripture, we see people praying about the weather. First, throughout the Psalms we see praise and thanksgiving to God from heart and lips. In Psalm 65:9-10, David sings of the Lord’s goodness, *“You care for the land and water it; you enrich it abundantly. The streams of God are filled with water to provide the people with grain, for so you have ordained it. You drench its furrows and level its ridges; you soften it with showers and bless its crop”* (NIV). Psalm 135:5-7 praises the Lord who brings the rain and Psalm 147:7-9 exalts the Lord for giving rain to make the grass grow and for giving food to all the cattle.

In the experiences found in the book of Jonah, we see all kinds of prayer. When Jonah and the sailors faced the violent winds and storm at sea, the sailors prayed to their gods, *“every man cried to his god”* (Jonah 1:5), and then they called on Jonah to pray to his God, *“How is it you are sleeping? Get up, call on your god. Perhaps your god will be concerned about us so that we will not perish”* (Jonah 1:6). When the storm grew far beyond their ability to handle it, *“they called on the LORD”* in earnest prayer and when God delivered them they sacrificed and made vows to Him (1:14, 16). After Jonah preached and the city repented, Jonah sulked. The Lord continued to deal with this reluctant prophet. When the Lord *“appointed a scorching east wind,”* Jonah despaired of life. He prayed to die and the Lord rebuked him. God was at work on multiple fronts to fulfill His will.

When Ahab and Israel continued their idolatrous ways, at the Lord’s direction Elijah prayed that there be no rain and the rain ceased for three and a half years. Then, he prayed again and abundant rains came. James 5:17-18 speaks of this, illustrating the impact of the prayers of a righteous man (1 Kings 17:1; 18:1, 41-46). In Jeremiah 14:22, we hear the cry of Jeremiah, *“Are there any among the idols of the nations who give rain? Or can the heavens grant showers? Is it not Thou, O Lord our God? Therefore we hope in Thee, for Thou art the one who hast done all these things.”*



Weather is one of the tools God uses to bring people to **worship** Him for who He is. He wants to give **witness** of who He is and what He can do, especially desiring that people come to know the salvation Jesus Christ alone can bring. He also guides the weather for the **work** that needs to be done, the work for physical and material needs and the work for the eternal spiritual benefit of those who will believe in Him. Those who will entrust their lives into His hands find His forgiveness. He saves forever.

All Three At the Same Time—Often when a calamity strikes, we can find God working in all three of these ways. For example, a hurricane coming across a region supplies abundant rainfall which fills aquifers and replenishes where there has been lack—that is maintenance. At the same time, He may show His mercy by sparing many from harm. Others who face destruction of property, may be humbled to call on the Lord. Testimonies abound of those who have come to Christ because of a tragedy or some loss. That is part of the mercy of God—giving them the treasure of eternal life, though they faced the loss of something temporal, an extremely small loss in comparison. For others, God shows a measure of judgment through the same storm. His ways are always right and He alone knows what each needs. The right response is to humble yourself, calling on the Lord, surrendering your life to Him and always open to what He may be saying.



*The right response is to
humble yourself...*

Acts 17:27—God who gives all provision, calls all to seek Him and find Him. *“He is not far from each one of us.”* God *“now commands all men everywhere to repent, because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained, He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him [Jesus] from the dead.”* (17:30-31).

The weather system of Acts 27 became the platform for a witness to the Roman commander, the 275 on board ship, the people of Malta, and all who have read that testimony since then.

3. Weather is for Work—to accomplish His work in the physical/material/temporary realm as well as the spiritual/eternal realm.

The Scriptures record that God gives sun and rain in abundance to supply food and provision so that all might be fed and taken care of. This is His supply that is part of the **work** He has given us to do, the part we play in receiving our daily bread. Psalm 104:14 speaks of the Lord who *“causes the grass to grow for the cattle, and vegetation for the service of man, that he may bring forth food from the earth.”* All is given ultimately that we might live a life of **worshipping** Him and of **witnessing** to others of His love, care, and the salvation from sin He gives.

Psalm 148:7-13

“Praise the LORD from the earth, you great sea creatures and all the depths; fire and hail, snow and clouds; stormy wind, fulfilling His word; mountains and all hills; fruitful trees and all cedars; beasts and all cattle; creeping things and flying fowl; kings of the earth and all peoples; princes and all judges of the earth; both young men and maidens; old men and children. Let them praise the name of the LORD, for His name alone is exalted; His glory is above all the earth and heaven.”



III. HOW Does the Lord Direct the Weather? How Does the Lord Fulfill His Will?

Job 37:5, 11-13

“God thunders with His voice wondrously, doing great things which we cannot comprehend.... With moisture He loads the thick cloud; He disperses the cloud of His lightning. And it changes direction, turning around by His guidance, that it may do whatever He commands it on the face of the inhabited earth. Whether for correction, or for His world, or for lovingkindness, He causes it to happen.”

In the natural realm, God directs the weather by the winds. The winds are at His command to accomplish His purposes.

In the supernatural realm, God also directs by the Winds, the Winds of His Spirit, working at His command to accomplish His eternal purposes.

1. He works through the Winds of His Spirit to bring people to true Worship

On the morning of Pentecost, Acts 2:2 says *“and suddenly there came from heaven a noise like a violent, rushing wind.”* The word “wind” is better translated “breath” as it is in Acts 17:24. The “breath” of God rushed down upon the 120 disciples and they were filled with the Holy Spirit and began *“speaking of the mighty deeds of God”* (Acts 2:11). They were worshiping and giving witness of Jesus in their words. The Spirit worked bringing new worshipers to follow Jesus as Lord and Savior.

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2. He works through the Winds of His Spirit to prepare and open doors for the Witness of His Word, bringing people to receive Jesus as Lord and Savior.

In John 3, Jesus spoke of being born of the Spirit, born from above or born again so that one enters the kingdom of God. He spoke of the Spirit’s work using the picture of the wind moving, acting, and changing as He directs. No man can explain the way He works, but a man can experience those ways, that moving and working of the Spirit of God. Each believer can trust the Spirit of God to direct him to His divine appointments to share the message of Christ—to plant seed, to water seed, or to harvest seed.

In Acts 2, the disciples newly filled and controlled by the Winds of the Holy Spirit, gave bold witness to who Jesus is and what He had done. About 3,000 received that witness and believed in the risen Jesus as personal Lord and Savior, entrusting their lives to Him on Pentecost Sunday. Thousands more came to Christ in the weeks, months, and years that followed as the Spirit gave them boldness and wisdom to speak the Word of God. The winds of His convicting work brought people to a knowledge of Jesus as Lord and Savior.

3. He works through the Winds of His Spirit leading each into the Work He wants done.

In 1 Kings 19, Elijah ran from Jezebel and was directed by God to go to Mount Horeb, *“the mountain of God.”* There the Lord met with Him. First, the Lord manifested His power through *“a great and strong wind,”* then through *“an earthquake,”* and then *“a fire.”* The Lord did not speak through any of these. Finally, Elijah heard *“a sound of a gentle blowing”* and God spoke, giving him his assignments, the work He had for Elijah to do. The Winds of the Spirit also direct us into the work He has for us to do. Through the Scriptures, through the witness of the Spirit in each believer’s heart, and through leaders in the Body of Christ, the Lord communicates His will, His assignments, the work He wants each to do.

God directs the Weather for the **Maintenance** of His earth, to show **Mercy** on earth, or to reveal a **Measure** of His Judgment and Correction on Earth.