

In a Word: Rain – Matthew 5:45

- Sometimes rain is good, some days rain is not good
 - Last week's rain was good, for the gardens, the yards
 - The same rain that causes our gardens to grow can also cause devastation
- Most Rain
 - Mawsynram, (ma-sa-rom) India. It is reportedly the wettest place on Earth, with an average annual rainfall of 467 (39 ft.) in.
According to the Guinness Book of World Records, Mawsynram received 1,000 in. (83 ft.) of rainfall in 1985
 - The world's lowest average yearly precipitation in 0.03" during a 59-year period at Arica Chile.
- Rain in popular music
 - Raindrops Keep Falling on My Head, Rainy Days and Mondays Always Get Me Down
 - Who'll Stop the Rain
- Rain appears 115 times in the bible, only 12 times in the New Testament

I. Rain in the beginning

(4) This is the history of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens, (5) 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... (Genesis 2:4–5)

For after seven more days I will cause it to rain on the earth forty days and forty nights, and I will destroy from the face of the earth all living things that I have made." (Genesis 7:4)

- a. What two things came after the flood?
 - i. The rainbow and the seasons

"While the earth remains, Seedtime and harvest, Cold and heat, Winter and summer, And day and night Shall not cease." (Genesis 8:22)

Thus I establish My covenant with you: Never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of the flood; never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth."

I set My rainbow in the cloud, and it shall be for the sign of the covenant between Me and the earth. (Genesis 9:11, 13)

- b. On the earth today, rain can be good or it can be bad.
 - i. It is the way of nature, set in motion after the flood.
- c.

d. The blessing of rain sustained life and was promised in the Law of Moses

'If you walk in My statutes and keep My commandments, and perform them, then I will give you rain in its season, the land shall yield its produce, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit. (Leviticus 26:3–4)

e. The withholding of rain was used as a punishment for disobedience

Lest the LORD's anger be aroused against you, and He shut up the heavens so that there be no rain, and the land yield no produce, and you perish quickly from the good land which the LORD is giving you.

(Deuteronomy 11:17)

f. Many other times throughout the Old Testament story, God used rain or drought to accomplish His will.

i. As in Elijah's drought of 3-1/2 years in 1 Kings

ii. But is also used metaphorically as in the New Testament.

He shall come down like rain upon the grass before mowing, Like showers that water the earth.

(Psalm 72:6)

A poor man who oppresses the poor Is like a driving rain which leaves no food. (Proverbs 28:3)

iii.

II. Rain in the New Testament

a. Rain, as it appears in the New Testament is used metaphorically rather than as part of the story.

b. It was raining during the shipwreck at Malta...

And the natives showed us unusual kindness; for they kindled a fire and made us all welcome, because of the rain that was falling and because of the cold. (Acts 28:2)

i. It is mentioned several times as a blessing from God...

c. Rain is mentioned as a blessing in Paul's sermon to the people of Lystra

i. He had healed a lame man and the people wanted to worship Paul and Barnabas as gods...

Nevertheless He did not leave Himself without witness, in that He did good, gave us rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness." (Acts 14:17)

ii. The blessing of rain on the farmer's crops

Therefore be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, waiting patiently for it until it receives the early and latter rain. (James 5:7)

1. Early rain was in the Fall, the latter was in the Spring

d. Jesus used a rainstorm to illustrate the wise and foolish builders of Matthew 7:24-27

(24) “Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: (25) and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock. (Matthew 7:24–25)

e.

f. Back to the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus used rain to illustrate a very important part of discipleship...

(43) “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ (44) But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, (45) 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. (46) For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? (47) And if you greet your brethren only, what do you do more than others? Do not even the tax collectors do so? (48) Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect. (Matthew 5:43–48)

g. “He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.”

- i. In this we can see a great principal of God and nature.
- ii. Some say if God is a God of love, how can He allow floods, storms, tornadoes, and other natural disasters which harm and kill innocent people?
- iii. One answer may be that these forces of nature were set into motion long ago because of sin. Sin caused the great catastrophic flood, which changed the earth to its present state.
- iv. It is because of Satan and sin that people die.

For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 6:23)

h. Secondly, the lesson of loving our fellowman is of the utmost importance.

But is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. (2 Peter 3:9)

For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, (Titus 2:11)

- i. A third lesson seen in this statement is that life is not always fair and just.
 - i. Good people suffer while evil people prosper.
 - ii. “Then do we wonder, why others prosper, living so wicked year after year”
 - iii. This is a lesson we should teach our children
 1. No one wants their child to be hurt or suffer wrong

2. Some attempt to shield the child from all unfairness (inequality)
3. This can leave a child ill-equipped to face life's real challenges
4. Especially when our children face the extra challenges of Christianity

j. We can see the unfairness of life in Jesus's story of the rich man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19ff)

(19) "There was a certain rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and fared sumptuously every day.

(20) But there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, full of sores, who was laid at his gate, (21) desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table. Moreover the dogs came and licked his sores.

(Luke 16:19–21)

i. The rich man had an umbrella, while Lazarus sat in the rain.

k. The Christian's hope is not based on this life, where it rains on us but eternity in heaven.

(3) Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, (4) to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you... (1 Peter 1:3–4)

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