



His Blessing of Showers

By Betty Marschner

Opening prayer: Heavenly Father, as we spend these moments pondering Your work in both drought and famine, instill in us a thankful countenance in the midst of both situations. We know that you can work good through all conditions in our temporal lives. Bless our time in Your Word. May we continue to grow as redeemed children through the life, death, and resurrection of Your dear Son Jesus Christ, set apart now to spread the good news of the Gospel everywhere to everyone. We ask this in the name of Jesus. Amen.

We begin by reading aloud together Ezekiel 34:26 (ESV): *And I will make them and the places all around my hill a blessing, and I will send down the showers in their season; they shall be showers of blessing.*

In this text, God is again promising a blessing on a people who often forgot about Him. Those wayward Israelites in olden times were not unlike us today. During times of prosperity they became complacent and frequently began to worship idols and/or false prophets. After a time of testing they would once again repent and were again blessed by the One Triune God.

As I start to write this study, Dakotans are in the grips of a stubborn three-year drought. To farmers and ranchers this is very devastating. Hopes and dreams are shriveled and turn to powdery dust in the relentless heat and dry conditions. Many anxious eyes look upward daily to see if any relief in the form of a fluffy, billowing cloud might appear in the crystal clear, azure sky.

It seems fitting then to spend a few moments considering how our Lord God works through seasons of famine or drought. Read the following passages and answer the questions.

Famine or drought was used at times, especially in the Old Testament, as a tool to motivate God’s people to repent and move in another direction.

What caused Abram to leave the promised country to live in Egypt? See **Genesis 12:10**. _____

In **Genesis 26:1–2**, what caused Isaac to leave his land? _____

Can you think of a time in your life when adversity caused you to move in another direction? Share. _____

God also used famine or drought as a form of judgment upon a wayward people. Read **Haggai 1:7–11**. Why did God call for a famine on the Judeans who returned to Jerusalem? _____

Do you think that God can still use droughts or famine in our time to move people to repentance? _____

Look at **Genesis 26:2–5**. When we are in a season of famine, what do these words of comfort to Isaac tell us about God? _____

What words of comfort does Apostle Paul write in **Romans 8:35–39**? _____

There is great comfort in knowing that, through all adversity, even when disciplined for being wayward, our God is with us and nothing will ever separate us from His love. How does this fact help us as sisters in Christ to relate to others dealing with adversity? _____

As I continued working through this study, our Lord saw fit to bless with life-giving showers. Once again the small ponds teemed with life, the grasses grew lush and green, and all things seemed to flourish. There was a time, though, when God used water in another way. Read **Genesis 7:4**. What was God's form of judgment on a sin-filled world? _____

Noah and his family were saved from the waters of judgment that would bring certain death on the entire created world. Take a moment to discuss the differences and similarities of judgment and chastisement. _____

As Noah was saved through the waters, we are saved through the waters. Look up **Colossians 2:12** and **1 Peter 3:18–21**. Which waters save us? _____

In **Isaiah 55:10–11**, God draws a comparison between what rain and snow produce and His Word. What is the analogy? _____

Christ often spoke of life-giving water. In **John 4:13–14** what does Jesus offer this woman of Samaria? _____

Christ uses the metaphor of a bubbling spring to bring across the fact that, through the work of the Holy Spirit, this life-giving water wells up within us — not just to give us temporal relief from thirst, but to become an everlasting spring, welling up in us eternal life and an ever-lasting quenching of thirst. Through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, we are assured that we receive this life-giving water in our Baptism. We then tell others of this blessed eternal gift so they, too, can receive its blessings.

We close our study by reading together the words of Apostle Paul in Titus 3:5–7 (ESV): *He saved us, not because of work done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.*

Closing Prayer/Hymn: With one accord, O God, we pray: Grant us Your Holy Spirit. Help us in our infirmity Through Jesus' blood and merit. Grant us to grow in grace each day That by this sacrament we may Eternal life inherit. [Amen.]*

*"All Who Believe and Are Baptized," LSB #601, verse 2. (Tune: "Dear Christian, One and All, Rejoice.")

Betty Marschner is active in her local, zone, and district LWML. As a retired wife of a North Dakota farmer/rancher, Betty is enjoying a new venture of service, that of writing Bible studies and devotions.