

## God provides abundantly—even in a drought

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Picture this: more than 450 days have passed since significant rain of more than 50mm [2 inches] has fallen over the catchment areas of the three huge reservoirs that supply your city. Dam levels have now dropped to only 23 percent capacity. Severe water restrictions are in force. It's getting desperate. Everyone is working hard to conserve what's left.

How do you pray about such a situation?

This is the question I'm confronted with every day. Australia is the driest continent on earth. Yet until this drought hit, I used the clean drinking-water piped to my house to take long showers, wash the car, liberally hose the garden. I left the tap on while I brushed my teeth. I never dreamed that the water I used so freely might one day be in seriously short supply.

This drought has been a loud wake-up call. My attitude toward water has changed forever, and so has the way I'm praying about drought.

### ***Divine Life is infinite, not subject to the inherent finiteness of matter-based living.***

When rain doesn't fall in the quantities people expect, many petition God for help. While this may seem reasonable, I've learned from the Bible that God is divine Love, and that each of us is made in His image and likeness. This fact changes everything because it means life is in Spirit, not in matter, and so divine Life is infinite, not subject to the inherent finiteness of matter-based living.

Some people might interpret that as a reason not to conserve. If Spirit is infinite, what do we have to worry about?

Well, from a spiritual standpoint of thinking and acting, the answer is that we don't have to be anxious about our personal well-being. God cares for every living thing, and supplies what's needed to sustain His creation.

We don't have to remind Him to do His job. Such a compassionate Maker doesn't withhold what is essential for everyone's well-being. God is impartial. He loves us. He abundantly provides us with all that's good. God is also divine Mind. He knows the needs of His children and supplies them.

Jesus' words remind me of this. "Seek not ye what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind. For all these things do the nations of the world seek after: and your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things. But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you."

### ***Life in Spirit also includes proper stewardship of the abundance God provides.***

There's another side to life in Spirit, however, and that has to do with proper stewardship of the abundance God provides. In times of drought, people complain that God isn't sending enough rain, or that it didn't fall in the right place.

Instead of joining in with this grumbling, I make a point of filling my heart with gratitude. Each drop of rain is cause to be grateful and acknowledge God's provision for His creation. If rain falls in one area but not in mine, I still give thanks for that evidence of God's abundance and provision for people elsewhere.

God has enough goodness for everyone. No one will miss out on what they need. When it does rain in my backyard, I take time to thank God for His loving provision. And my prayer of gratitude has also changed my behavior. I've discovered: "Gratitude is much more than a verbal expression of thanks. Action expresses more gratitude than speech." That's why I now strive to capture and conserve the rain that falls around my house.

In Genesis 1, verse 28, the Bible states that God gave man (meaning men and women) dominion over all the earth. I believe this refers to a stewardship initiated by divine wisdom. God has blessed the earth. He has done His part. Now we have to do ours. For me, this means becoming a better steward of what I have.

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Since the onset of the drought, my husband and I have reduced our water consumption by more than 60 percent, and we continue to decrease our usage. Conserving water is not only sensible in this drought, which has been described as the worst in Australia for 100 years, but it's also a good long-term practice.

My prayer about drought has extended to include officials at all levels of government who are responsible for guaranteeing the water supply to towns and cities. God has a plentiful supply of right ideas, answers, and solutions to meet every human need. His right ideas sustain His creation.

In our prayers for our environment, whatever the challenge, we can affirm that those who are elected to implement water-securing actions are God's children, God-impelled and God-directed. They do heed His ideas. They have the divine impetus to take decisive and intelligent action.

Every night the TV news includes a weather report. A forecast of no rainfall can be quite depressing, but rather than accept this prognosis as truth, I leave my mind open. Weather forecasts are largely based on computer modeling and they cannot accurately predict the future. For example, Brisbane had more rainfall in September last year than in the past 70 Septembers—this was despite the weather bureau's prediction of a rain-free month. I'd much rather trust that God, not weather forecasts, outlines the prospects for His creation.

***Elijah sent his servant to look seaward for signs of rain.***

A Bible story highlights this point. There'd been severe famine in Samaria and no sign of rain. As the prophet Elijah prayed about this condition, he sent his servant to look seaward. The first time, there was nothing. So he sent him again and again.

The seventh time, the servant reported seeing a little cloud coming out of the sea, shaped like a man's hand. "And it came to pass in the meanwhile, that the heaven was black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain."

This story reminds me that God has made available to the men and women of His creating exactly what is necessary to maintain their well-being. Even in the middle of drought, God's law of plenty operates for everyone at all times. Affirming this in prayer unfolds the wisdom that secures harmony and meets every need.

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