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Rain

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Rain

Too much or too little rain has very significant effects on the lives of many people, and in the case of fires during times of drought or floods during periods of intense rainfall, immediate consequences. Our options concerning rainfall are limited: we might be able to choose where to live, have the capability of moving in times of trouble, and belong to an organized society which provides water storage for dry times and flood-control projects for the opposite times. But we do not make rain begin or cease to fall.

We adapt and modify our lives according to when or if rain falls, and in the amounts that come or do not come from the skies above us. For all the efforts human societies rightly place on weather forecasts and on rainfall predictions in particular, we adjust to rainfall amounts rather than decide upon them or organize them according to our needs and desires.

Members of societies throughout history have organized water projects, from small community drainage ditches to huge national storage and canal projects, doing all that human ingenuity and creativity can provide. But we do not expect any individual or mega-organization to bring us rain when we need it and cause rain to stop falling when it causes harm. Doing all that human ingenuity can contribute is appropriate. Asking God to do what is not within our power is equally fitting: to pray for rain when water is scarce, or to request a cessation of rain when water is overabundant.

Many of us find it easy to pray for an immediate and present need of someone we know; praying is one of the ways that we manifest our love. But praying for broad issues, such as weather, is perhaps not as common a practice for those who believe in God. Our habits might tend towards either exercising control when we have it, or else accepting everything else that is not within our capabilities as individuals or as members of organizations. Yet all of us, at times, ask persons who are skilled in areas other than ours, to assist us. We have learned that we do not have to do everything ourselves, but can rely on others for assistance, while at the same time we exercise some of our particular abilities on behalf of others.

We probably do not think of ourselves as prophets, like Moses, who would address God on behalf of the people. But each of us has our own inspirations to follow in our unique personal relationship with God. If it occurs to us as an individual to pray, for any person or for any

worthy cause, why would we not? Unlike heads of state who rarely listen to requests of any but selected representatives, God not only hears each and every individual with undivided attention and love, but inspires individuals to express their love for others in a variety of ways, including praying about events that impact the lives of many persons.

Whether we communicate with God about a momentary personal concern, or the absence or excess of rain, one immediate effect takes place within us. Just as we are changed for the better in some way by every sincere communication with another person, we always benefit by making our interests the subject of comment to or conversation with, God. Praying for something – asking – has nothing to do with control of the outcomes. The issue is always and only about our communication with God, in whom we trust. If we ask anyone else for assistance in an area of his or her competency, we either trust that person to respond as he or she thinks best, or we should not ask. A request is not a command.

Everything in creation that is of significance to us, including rain, provides opportunities for talking with God.