



Meteorological Extremes

A prophetic reflection by Geoff Waggett

Towards the end of 1997, I prophesied that God was going to use the favourite topic of our conversation namely the WEATHER as a means of getting our attention. A fairly safe prophecy some may think but none could have imagined the extremes of weather we have experienced at the end of last year and during the first six months of this year (1998).

It is perhaps the experience of most clergy and pastors, that their flock spend more time talking about the weather than about Jesus. Often the first comment on a Sunday morning, as a worshipper comes through the church doors, is about the sun, wind, rain or if you live in my part of the world (a South-Wales valley) or even Wrexham, snow. Is God speaking to us through such events? Is He trying to get our attention? Is He allowing the created elements to impinge drastically on our comfortable existence?

Perhaps it is no coincidence that the worst extremes of the weather ever recorded have occurred during the Christmas period of 1997 and Good Friday/Easter Day of 1998. The Bible warns of tempest, flood, hail and snow in the end times. What do we make of the warm sunny extremes of the Summer weather which occurred during February and early March and the cold, wet, somewhat Winter conditions during our normal Summer months. These things, in insurance terms, are described as "Acts of God". Does God control the weather; does He allow such extremes; is the weather, part of our fallen creation, somehow outside the remit of God? If we believe the latter then we can indulge in the great British habit of blaming the weather forecasters.

What do we say, as Christians, to those who lost their electricity supply during the festive seasons? What do we say to those whose homes have been flooded, their material possessions destroyed and their lives turned upside down?

If as a nation we cry out to God, I believe He will turn from His wrath and save us. If not all the extremes we have experienced together with the tornadoes, hurricanes and torrential rain will become the norm. God is shaking the nation. He is upsetting our reliance on material possessions, our taking for granted power supply and means of communication and transport.

God came to earth at Christmastide. Jesus died on Good Friday and rose again on Easter Day. For many in our nation the only significance of this past occasion was the lack of a cooked Christmas lunch and the opportunity to go tobogganing in the Brecon Beacons on Easter bank holiday. God will not be mocked.

"If my people, who are called by my name will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will HEAL THEIR LAND" (2 Chronicles 7 verse 14)

(At the time of writing Geoff was our chairman at Anglican Renewal Ministries (Wales))

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