

“...that He will give the rain for your land in its season, the early and late rain,
that you may gather in your grain and your new wine and your oil.”

Deuteronomy 11:14

Stuff Falling from the Sky

Here in this place our more sophisticated brethren dismissively refer to as “fly-over country,” no matter the season, something is usually falling to earth from some place overhead.

I WAS BORN AND RAISED IN THESE PARTS, and the rhythms and ways of this land were ingrained in me from the beginning. In the winter months, snow, rain, even ice would fall from the sky—if not with clockwork dependability, it was at least sufficiently reliable to remove winter coats from the basement and to wax the runners of my Radio Flyer sled in anticipation.

In the spring, rain would reliably fall from the sky, reawakening life from the frozen soil. Rivers of runoff would flow down the gutters on either side of our hill on my walks to and from grade school—dressed, of course, in my yellow slicker with detachable hood and my buckle boots. In the summer, rain would continue to fall, if less frequently, keeping our backyard garden green and growing.

As summer dwindled down to the faded, drier days of autumn, soon a different form of precipitation would fall: colorful, drying leaves. As if prefiguring in dry form the approaching snowfall, the leaves would fill the air, drifting down to collect upon the browning lawns of the neighborhood.



When Linda and I lived on the west coast, the natives there declared the weather “perfect.” To us, however, the weather seemed unnatural, artificial. There wasn’t that comfortable seasonal rhythm in which our bodies and minds had been born and raised. Winter snow was nonexistent, replaced by infrequent rain. Summer rain was virtually unheard of. The musky, melancholy grace of autumn never occurred, since most trees in the area never shed their leaves. And temperatures (at least to our senses) were maddeningly constant.

For two decades we yearned to return to where something more natural than smog fell from the sky.

Now we live in the same climate in which we were raised—where the same seasonal rhythm is played out, with only minor variation, year after year. I may no longer go sledding down the nearest

hill after a winter snowfall; I may no longer heave my considerable bulk into the nearest pile of fallen autumn leaves—but those same bits of precipitation and drying foliage still come down from the skies at their appointed times.



Along with being reared where there was weather, I was born and raised to believe in God. As a child I was taught that God lived in heaven and, in practical terms, heaven was located somewhere over my head, somewhere far above the trees, the clouds—above even the breathable air. Heaven was out there beyond the stars, beyond the cosmos, beyond anything known by man.

In any case, no matter where I might be, God was up.

So it was only natural that I would come to associate the stuff falling from the sky with God. After all, the rain and snow seemed to fall from nothing more than thin air. Even after I learned that they actually fell from clouds, it still seemed more poetic to someone born a dreamer that they emanated from nothing more material than the Almighty's hand. Only later did I learn that God's word confirms my youthful suppositions.

“It shall come about, if you listen obediently to my commandments which I am commanding you today, to love the Lord your God and to serve Him with all your heart and all your soul, that He will give the rain for your land in its season, the early and late rain, that you may gather in your grain and your new wine and your oil. He will give grass in your fields for your cattle, and you will eat and be satisfied.”

Deuteronomy 11:13-15



The meteorologist knows that there is a specific, natural explanation for every drop of rain and every flake of snow that falls from the sky. The naturalist can expound at length about the climatic and seasonal influences upon deciduous trees that cause them to drop their leaves every year. But the poet knows that above science is heaven—and the hand of God. The believer knows that even before He created man, God created (and thus controls) science. Science may have its rules, but God created the rules; clouds may form according to natural laws, but God created those laws.

So it is right and true to see God in the rain, the snow, even the cascading leaves of autumn. It is a righteous supposition to see His purposeful hand in all the stuff falling from the sky, for He is sovereign over it all.