

Seed Time and Harvest Were Never to Cease

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(Genesis 8:22)

Seed Time and Harvest Did Cease for Seven
Years
(Genesis 41:54-56; 45:6)

Following the global flood that occurred during the time of Noah, God stated that He would not destroy every living thing again "while the earth remains."

And the Lord smelled a soothing aroma (cf. Gen. 8:20). Then the Lord said in His heart. 'I will never again curse the ground for man's sake, although the imagination (intent or thought) of man's heart is evil from his youth; **nor will I again destroy every living thing as I have done.** ²²While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and winter and summer, and day and night shall not cease' (Gen. 8:21-22; NKJV used throughout unless otherwise noted; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added).

God's promise, regarding seed time and harvest continuing without interruption, was given in the context of a global disaster. In other words, there would never be a time when famine existed in every continent and country of this world at the same time. Therefore, it did not preclude local shortages or famines. In most cases, local shortages or famines were the result of man's poor land management (see: The Dust Bowl by Ken Burns), or the result of man's refusal to obey God's commands. Today there is debate about man's impact on the environment, which could also contribute to crop failures, food shortages, and severe famines.

But it shall come to pass, if you do not obey the voice of the Lord your God to observe carefully all His commandments and His statutes which I command you today, that all these curses will come upon you and overtake you (Dt. 28:15).

Cursed shall be your basket and your kneading bowl (i.e. food shortages). Cursed shall be the fruit (offspring) of your body **and the produce of your land, the increase of your cattle and the offspring of your flocks** (Dt. 28:17; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added).

And your heavens which are over your head shall be bronze, and the earth which is under you shall be iron. ²⁴The Lord will change the rain of your land to powder and dust; from the heaven it shall come down on you until you are destroyed (Dt. 28:23-24).

Also I (God) gave you cleanness of teeth (hunger) in all your (ancient Israel's) cities, and lack of bread in all your places; yet you have not returned to Me, says the Lord. ⁷I also withheld rain from you, when there were still three months to the harvest. I made it rain on one city; I withheld rain from another city. One part was rained upon, and where it did not rain the part withered (Amos 4:6-7; Ed. note in parenthesis).

In Genesis 41:54-56, there was a regional famine, but God still provided the needs of the people through the action of His servant, Joseph (Gen. 41:46-49; 53-57). It is important to note that all the countries affected by this famine were able to travel to Egypt and purchase grain. Therefore, it was not a global phenomenon.

So all countries came to Joseph in Egypt to buy grain, because the famine was severe in all lands (Gen. 41:57).

Also, there is no commentary stating that the countries surrounding Egypt were not planting and harvesting. In fact Joseph's family, who did not live in Egypt at the time, were able to harvest produce other than grain.

And their father Israel said to them (Joseph's brothers), 'If it must be so, then do this: **Take some of the best fruits of the land in your vessels** and carry down a present for the man – a little balm and a little honey, spices and myrrh, **pistachio nuts and almonds** (Gen. 43:11; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added).

The phrase "seed time and harvest" is directly related to the land producing some yield for human consumption, and it does not have to be limited to grain. In the case of grain, if a drought has lasted for more than a year, it is not wise to plow the land because the top soil will blow away.

For these two years the famine has been in the land, and there are still five years in which there will be neither plowing nor harvesting (Gen. 45:6).

Although there have been devastating famines throughout man's history, there has not been a global disaster that has wiped out every living being through starvation. Consequently, there is no contradiction in the scriptures that some use to claim God's word is inconsistent, regarding seed time and harvest.

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