

## Climate change

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Paris—In a United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report published February 2, some 2,500 scientists from 130 nations affirmed that global warming is fact, not fiction. The consensus findings, endorsed by 113 governments, declared the problem to be 90 percent manmade, and that the earth's average temperature could rise by as much as 3 degrees Fahrenheit by the end of the 21st century if corrective action isn't taken now.

Here in Australia, we're seeing the sobering evidence of climate change. Satellite images reveal an alarming depletion of the South Pole sea ice. An increase in sea-water temperature is causing the rapid bleaching and slow demise of the world-famous colored coral of the Great Barrier Reef.

Continuing extremes in weather, severe drought, and dwindling water supplies throughout the country, combined with what is happening elsewhere in the world, give rise to this question: Shouldn't we pay attention to what scientists are saying?

In considering the answer, I've been thinking about the Bible prophets of Old Testament time. The wise people of that era often voiced concern about the needs of the day and the consequences of not taking corrective actions. Sadly, history shows that their warnings of the danger ahead sometimes went unheeded.

### ***Are these warnings an inspired directive from divine wisdom?***

In praying for the future safety of this planet, including everyone and everything that depends on it for life, I've been seeking direction. Are those speaking out about the global effects of climate change acting as wise prophets of today? Are they alerting us to the need for action? Are these warnings an inspired directive from divine wisdom?

In helping me to determine the answers, I've been pondering this thought-provoking statement made by Mary Baker Eddy in her book *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*: "It is the prerogative of the ever-present, divine Mind, and of thought which is in rapport with this Mind, to know the past, the present, and the future.

"Acquaintance with the Science of being enables us to commune more largely with the divine Mind, to foresee and foretell events which concern the universal welfare, to be divinely inspired,—yea, to reach the range of fetterless Mind."

This statement tells me that it is possible for us to know right now what action we should take to safeguard human welfare and to preserve life in every form. As I pray about climate change and severe weather conditions, I'm encouraged by a remarkable Bible example of inspired response to climate crisis. It's recorded in the book of Genesis.

### ***Joseph was asked if he could explain Pharaoh's vision.***

Through a series of events, a young man named Joseph was sold into slavery and taken to Egypt. While unjustly imprisoned there, he interpreted the dreams of two men. A couple of years later, one of these men brought Joseph to the attention of the country's ruler, who'd seen a disturbing vision one night. Pharaoh couldn't understand what was being revealed to him, and neither could his advisors.

Joseph was asked if he could explain Pharaoh's vision and give everyone an answer as to its meaning.

Joseph turned to God as the source of all intelligence and right ideas. He told the king that there would be seven years of plenty, followed by seven years of famine. He further advised Pharaoh to act right away to conserve the food produced in the good years, as a means of preventing starvation during the famine.

Immediately, Joseph was given the job of implementing a plan. As a result of his wisdom and foresight, the people of Egypt survived the ensuing years of famine. Everyone was fed, as well as those in neighboring countries who sought Egypt's aid.

So, where does the constructive foresight Joseph displayed come from? *Science and Health* asserts: "The ancient prophets gained their foresight from a spiritual, incorporeal standpoint, not by foreshadowing evil and mistaking fact for fiction,—predicting the future from a groundwork of corporeality and human belief. When sufficiently advanced in Science to be in harmony with the truth of being, men become seers and prophets involuntarily, controlled not by demons, spirits, or demigods, but by the one Spirit."

***God sustains us and the universe we inhabit.***

The All-wise truly is the source of humanity's acumen. God is infinite intelligence, and He sustains us and the universe we inhabit. When we tune in to God through prayer, we receive divine direction. If corrections are needed in what we're doing, then, as the very image of divine Mind, we have the ability to pay attention, be receptive, and make the changes that will sustain life.

This is what my husband and I, along with thousands of our fellow Brisbanites, are doing right now. There's a water crisis here, so we're paying attention, being receptive, and making changes in the way we think about and use water.

We have to, because our city has progressively moved from Level 1 water restrictions to Level 5—with the prospect of even more restrictive Levels 6 and 7 to follow shortly. Unless several inches of rain fall over catchment areas soon, we may be allowed to wash clothes only on certain days of the week. Householders may also receive fines for excessive water usage.

A city needs water on a daily basis, not just for basic human needs, but to sustain the livelihood of the many who depend on a regular water supply—hairdressers, garden centers, restaurants, not to mention schools and care facilities. That's why I'm actively praying and listening for divine ideas that will help me save water around my home. I want to play my part in conserving the remaining clean drinking water piped from the dams to households and businesses.

***Those in leadership positions can hear and heed God's right ideas.***

With just 20 percent of dam water remaining, there is an urgent need for all levels of government to find immediate and long-term solutions. Visionaries are needed. That's why I'm affirming each day that God is always present to guide each and every one's thoughts and actions for the benefit of all. Those in leadership positions can hear and heed God's right ideas, which will ensure a population's preservation, even in a dry land.

A good example of this is illustrated in the Bible account of Moses, ancient Israel's great national leader. Moses secured the release of his countrymen, who'd been laboring as slaves in Egypt—the same nation that had earlier benefited from Joseph's spiritual insight and leadership. Taking the only available route out from captivity, the Israelites were forced to journey on foot through “the wilderness of Sin.” After some time in the desert, they reached a place called Rephidim. To their dismay, it had no water supply.

Desperately thirsty, the people became angry with Moses. Knowing their urgent need for water, he wondered what he could possibly do for them in a desert environment. How could he supply the water needed to keep so many people alive? Moses turned to God for help. As a result of his prayer, he was led to find life-sustaining water in a rocky fissure. When Moses struck the rock with his staff, thirst-quenching water gushed out, saving the lives of the people who were relying on his leadership.

Lifesaving answers from God are always present to meet the urgent needs of the day; we just need to listen for and act on them. Throughout human history, individuals, countries, and civilizations have been threatened by the effects of climatic conditions—flood, drought, famine, storm. Yet, spiritually-minded individuals, such as Joseph and Moses, have turned to divine Love for the answers. Through prayer, listening, and heeding the ideas that came to them, they benefited thousands of people.

***Many fresh, innovative ideas are being implemented.***

Our modern society can do likewise. In fact, it's happening right now. Many fresh, innovative ideas are being implemented in my home state of Queensland. For example, city people are diverting “gray” laundry water onto gardens. They're also reducing power consumption and carbon emission by replacing incandescent light bulbs with energy-saving bulbs.

Through wisdom and divine inspiration, we have the ways and means to keep everyone safe. The first step in doing so may well be to listen with openness to the voices of those people who have forward vision in regard to the environment, and give them due consideration. When it comes to personal safety, being aware of dangers that may lie ahead is important.

If I were standing on a railway track, for example, and I didn't know that a high-speed train was due at any moment, I'd be glad to be warned of the imminent danger so I could move out of harm's way. Similarly, those who look ahead and consider the health of this planet, and are alerting humanity to possible problems, are enabling us to take steps to safeguard our world.

God has life-preserving answers. Divine wisdom has the solutions—the inspired ideas that we need to act wisely. Everyone can prayerfully listen for God's right ideas, become more receptive, and employ those ideas to sustain life.



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*Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* by Mary Baker Eddy, is her textbook on Christian Science healing practice and her class textbook in teaching Christian Science healing.

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**Spiritual foresight:**

**Science and Health:** 84:11-18, 84:3-10

**King James Bible:** Gen. 40:1-23, Gen. 41:1-57, Ex. 17:1-7