

**“A RAINY DAY”  
MAY 2009**

As I write this article, I look out the window and see a grey, windy, rainy day. The rain has been falling steadily for a few hours. It's early afternoon, but the cars already have their headlights turned on. Traffic has slowed down as cautious drivers cope with the wet roads. I step outside for a moment and confirm that it is raining cats and dogs. Non-English speakers are puzzled by this phrase. Do we really mean that animals are falling from the clouds? Credit for this allusion goes to Jonathan Swift who described the affects of rain in eighteenth-century European cities. Swift noted that cats and dogs were sometimes washed from the tops of buildings. Dog and cat lovers have since regretted his choice of words.

Today's rain in the Seminole area is getting a mixed reaction. For those with an afternoon tee-off time, there is disappointment and a quick change of plans. For those with tickets for tonight's Rays' game, there is gratitude for a domed stadium. They know that they will get wet, however, in the dash from their car to the "Trop."

With water levels at historic lows all through the Tampa Bay area, many are glad to see today's rain. Farmers have crops to grow. Homeowners have lawns to maintain. Thirsty city-dwellers need a replenished water supply.

The writers of the Bible see rain as one of God's gifts. In Israel, God sent the "early rains" in December and the "spring rains" in April." These two rainy seasons supplied all of the water for the entire year. The Hebrews prayed that God would send an adequate supply of water for both crops and people. When the rains came, it was a cause for joy and thanksgiving. The psalmist writes,

*“Sing to the Lord with thanksgiving;  
make melody to our God upon the lyre!  
He covers the heavens with clouds,  
he prepares rain for the earth,  
he makes grass grow upon the hills.”  
(Psalm 147:7-8)*

The Israelites took time to thank God for his daily blessings. They did not take the rain for granted. Their attitude has much to teach us even today. Thank you, O God, for today's rain.

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