

Real Global Warming

by: Ronald L. Dart

I got a note recently from one of our listeners and she asked me if I would comment on global warming, especially in the light of the greatness of God and the greatness of God as shown in the universe. I wasn't altogether sure what she was driving at with her question, but I thought it was worth looking into. So, naturally, I went to the Internet, where you can find out everything about anything—or maybe it's anything about everything; I'm never sure which. I came across a really fascinating review of the literature on climate change. If you're not familiar, a review of the literature is something done in graduate school by graduate students. They collect all of the scientific literature, read it carefully, digest it, and then give a kind of a review: here is what everybody is saying about this. It was really quite long. It was exhaustive, and almost exhausting to read. But it was really fascinating.

The report is too long to go into in any great detail, but consider for the moment, the abstract of the report with which they began. It says this: "A review of the research literature concerning the environmental consequences of increased levels of atmospheric carbon dioxide leads to the conclusion that increases during the 20th century have produced no deleterious effects upon global weather, climate, or temperature. Increased carbon dioxide has, however, markedly increased plant growth rates. Predictions of harmful climatic effects due to future increases in minor greenhouse gases like CO₂ are in error and do not conform to current experimental knowledge." This issue goes back and forth in the news media and with politicians, which leads me to feel that it's a political issue as much as it is a scientific issue. These fellows, in going through all the literature, made it clear that increased levels of CO₂ are not having any significant effect on climate temperature, but are having a very large effect on plant growth. It was that comment about "markedly increased plant growth rates" that caught my attention. It was consistent with something I had heard and had been thinking about already. You can't get through high school without learning that plants take in carbon dioxide and give off oxygen. We breathe in oxygen and breathe out carbon dioxide. That's one of the reasons why we have plants in our homes and offices. So, plants do better with a lot of carbon dioxide; humans do better with plenty of oxygen. Therefore, it stands to reason that increased levels of CO₂ in the atmosphere really would be good for plants. I fast forwarded through this study to see if I could find some information on that. They had some really cool graphs on plant growth. One figure shows that long-lived pine trees—some, such as bristlecone pines, can live thousands of years—show a marked increase in needles, branches, and boughs with an increase in CO₂ levels. Why? Well, because carbon dioxide is

in effect, a fertilizer for plants and makes them grow better. It's a result that we should expect.

Another graph that shows increasing inventories of standing hardwood and softwood timber in the United States was compiled from statistics over the past fifty years while CO₂ has been going up steadily. Then there are the orange trees. A chart of the relative growth in orange trees from two different levels of CO₂ shows that raising CO₂ levels from 400 to 700 parts per million resulted in some very positive things. The trunks and limbs of young orange trees increased by 171% with that increase in carbon dioxide. Trunks and limbs of mature orange trees went up 107%; fine roots of young trees went up 175%. There was also a 127% increase in the number of oranges on the tree. All that was brought about by a 75% increase in CO₂.

So, what's the point? Well, global warming is good for trees. This pattern holds across all manner of food supplies, which means that we are in a much stronger position for the production of food with these higher levels of CO₂. Then there's this from the report: "The human use of coal, oil, and natural gas has not measurably warmed the atmosphere. And the extrapolation of current trends shows that it will not significantly do so in the foreseeable future. What it does do, however, is to release carbon dioxide, which accelerates the growth rates of plants and also permits plants to grow in drier regions. Animal life which depends upon plants also flourishes. As coal, oil, and natural gas are used to feed and lift from poverty vast numbers of people across the globe, more CO₂ will be released into the atmosphere. This will help to maintain and improve the health, longevity, and prosperity and productivity of all people. Human activities are believed to be responsible for the rise in CO₂ level in the atmosphere. Mankind is moving the carbon in coal, oil, and natural gas from below ground to the atmosphere and surface where it is available for conversion into living things. We are living in an increasingly lush environment of plants and animals as a result of the CO₂ increase. Our children will enjoy an earth with far more plant and animal life as that which we are now blessed. This is a wonderful and unexpected gift from the Industrial Revolution." I thought that was an absolutely astonishing conclusion.

Are the authors of this fascinating study all wrong? They may be wrong in some places, but can't be all wrong, because the increase in plant life, including food crops, is a fact. And re-forestation—something we work at all the time—has a cooling effect, a moderating effect, on the climate. It made me wonder if it was possible that the great Creator built into the earth the counterweights to human development, to provide resources that more human beings would need, and to balance out the effects of our indulgences. That report is entitled *Environmental Effects of Increased Atmospheric Carbon Dioxide*. It was produced at the Oregon Institute of Science and Medicine and the George C. Marshall Institute in Washington, D.C.

Then there's this: the earth was not made to last forever. It was only made for a time. All of us know that our sun will burn out one of these days and, if you look a little further into it, you'll know that what happens when the sun burns out is that it gets a whole lot bigger. In fact, the size of the sun will actually reach beyond earth's orbit. But the earth is getting warmer now because the sun is getting hotter. I didn't really know that. I thought the sun was in a state of equilibrium, but apparently not. Recently I happened to be watching a documentary titled *Hyperspace*. The production starred Sam Neil and included a fascinating segment on the end of life on earth. This was not a biblical apocalyptic thing. It was a graphic explanation of the facts of the solar system. The earth appears to rotate around the sun in a kind of green belt. The graphic on the screen showed a belt area some distance from the sun, in which life, like ours, is possible. We wobble back and forth a bit over long time periods, but we stay within the narrow range of that distance which allows us to have the climate we have. Everything in the solar system has to be the way it is for us to be able to survive here. But the sun is, and has been for some time, getting hotter and hotter, and it will continue to. Another graphic showed that this green belt we are in will continue to move further and further away from the sun, but we won't. As a result, earth will become hotter. The surface of the earth will become so hot, in fact, that all life on earth will be (pardon the expression) toast. The documentary postulated about what might happen to human kind. Would it mean the end of human kind? What might we do to survive?

Well, it got a bit far-fetched, but nevertheless, they thought that maybe we could migrate to Mars. After all, if the green belt is going further out, Mars will be rotating around the sun in that green belt where life is possible. We couldn't live there now, but if Mars missions over a few years were successful, we might be able to create a livable atmosphere there. We could then migrate to Mars on some future fleet of spaceships and colonize the planet as the green belt arrives there. Well, no . . . we'd have to get there before the green belt I think, because earth will be toast. Perhaps we will live on Mars when it's a little too cold; we'll find a way. So if we colonize a new planet, human kind would survive for a while. Then the documentary went on to show how the green belt will eventually pass Mars and all life would then perish on Mars. The problem? Well, beyond Mars there is no place to go.

If you have ever watched *Star Trek*, you may not realize that man may never be able to reach "warp speed." The speed of light is the speed limit in the universe and we're not even going to get close to it. And, the distances between stars is so great that no human could ever live long enough to make the journey. I've often postulated about the possibility of life in other places in the universe. Maybe God created another planet somewhere where there are real people. We don't know anything about them. But what God has succeeded in doing is quarantining us from one another by distances so great that even electronic signals take too long to go from one place to the other. I suppose we could imagine a kind of space ark,

carrying life out into the darkness of space, but finding another world will not be like Columbus discovering America—not at all. The whole colony would die in space even if they escaped the end of the solar system. As the sun continues to expand and become hotter, it will become so large it will reach beyond earth's orbit—maybe to Mars. The earth will be melted down, absorbed into the sun, and finally the sun will exhaust its fuel and explode. Lest our space ark started very early, we could not hope to escape the blast of a dying star. The reality is—that human kind, like the earth we live on, is a temporary aberration in space and time, and it is all going to go away.

In watching the documentary with these graphic portrayals of the earth's end, it brought a Scripture to mind, 2 Peter 3:10-12: "*But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?*" Now, that's real global warming! It seems that global warming will reach a kind of climax. The thing that's kind of puzzling is, how did Peter know this? How was this man, writing in the first century, able to see off into the future such a time? With special effects, we can graphically show on a screen what is going to happen, and it matches what Peter said to a "T." I'm amazed that Peter would know how the world would end. I really should add to this that you and I have nothing to worry about. And I would say that if you were ever going to watch *Hyperspace* with your kids, you should let them know how far out in the future this is. It's sort of like the guy who meets one of his friends and his friend says, "Oh, oh, I just saw in the newspaper that the world is going to blow up and come to an end in 3 billion years." The guy, frightened, said, "What? What? What did you say?" His friend replied, "I said it will blow up in 3 billion years." And he said, "Oh, I'm so relieved. I thought you said 3 million years." As far as you and I are concerned, there's no material difference between 3 billion and 3 million, but we have every reason to believe that God will wind up project earth long before that day comes.

The documentary *Hyperspace* discusses so many ways that life could be destroyed here that it's disturbing. It's strange how science is only now beginning to see things that the prophet saw a long time ago. There was a segment in this documentary about meteors striking the earth. It is generally agreed that the extinction of dinosaurs was caused by a huge meteor strike that put so much material into the air that it darkened the earth and destroyed plant life. Since there was nothing for them to eat, they all died, and we went into a new era. There is evidence of it happening in the past and it's going to happen again. Everybody knows it; science knows it. They're working hard to spot all the asteroids and comets that could strike the earth, but I think everyone knows that sooner or later we're going to be hit, and we're going to be hit by something very significant. *Hyperspace* discussed that and

showed how it could happen—how it probably will happen. But then I thought about Revelation 6:12. In Revelation there was a scroll sealed with seven seals, and only the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world was found worthy to open these seals. And he began to open them. He gets all the way to the sixth seal in Revelation 6. John said, *“And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood.”* This is absolutely consistent with the description of a major meteor strike. Everything would shake. A blast from a meteor would kill everything within a certain radius. There would be the blackness in the sky and the moon would become like blood. *“And the stars of heaven [meteors, of course] fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places.”* This is big. *“And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?”*

Who, indeed? This really is a staggering description. I don't know what people thought generations ago when they read it, but in light of what I have seen presented, not only in this documentary but others as well, it's very sobering. The prophecies become so much more real in the light of what we know has happened and what's going to happen again. Isaiah spoke of something like this in chapter 34, verses 1-4: *“Come near, ye nations, to hear; and hearken, ye people: let the earth hear, and all that is therein; the world, and all things that come forth of it. For the indignation of the LORD is upon all nations, and his fury upon all their armies: he hath utterly destroyed them, he hath delivered them to the slaughter. Their slain also shall be cast out, and their stink shall come up out of their carcasses, and the mountains shall be melted with their blood. And all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll: and all their host shall fall down, as the leaf falleth off from the vine, and as a falling fig from the fig tree.”* He describes a terrible crisis at the time of the end, when the sky seems to be blown away and meteors are dropping on us like figs. It describes a meteor shower. When you put all this together and go back to Peter's letter, you begin to see what Peter was trying to get people to understand. He started off 2 Peter, chapter 3 by saying, *“This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance: That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour: Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.”* People are going to say, *“There's nothing new. The earth is going to go on. Nothing terrible is going to happen.”*

Peter said they were willingly ignorant of this, but it hasn't always been this way. He went back to talking about the great flood and how the earth was overflowed with water.

“For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.” It was water before; it’ll be the fire next time. *“But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.”*

Much of the stuff that these men are describing is a long way off in the future. But for each of us, as we live our lives day by day, it could come in a heartbeat. Maybe not a meteor falling out of the sky, but somebody’s SUV might run us down in the street. That is something we live with. What Peter is saying then is, all these things are going to be dissolved, everything in the world that you worked for and hoped for is going to be pointless. What kind of person should you be? You’ve been given a life—live it well.

This article was transcribed with minor editing from a message given by
Ronald L. Dart titled: "Real Global Warming" (07RGW) 7/24/07

Ronald L. Dart is an evangelist and is heard daily and weekly
on his Born to Win radio program.

You can contact Ronald L. Dart at Christian Educational Ministries
P.O. Box 560 Whitehouse, Texas 75791
Phone: (903) 839-9300 — 1-888-BIBLE-44

www.borntowin.net