



St. Xavier's Global Earth Summit-IV



International Conference on “Global Climate Change and Water Disasters”

March 27 - 29, 2015



DEPT. OF ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES, ST. XAVIER'S COLLEGE, KOLKATA.

GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE AND WATER DISASTERS



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Water is synonymous with Life. It nurtures parched throats and barren lands, helping all God's creatures to not only thrive, but also to live. It cleanses the unclean, absolves sins and leads one to salvation. Yet, when man descends into the dark recesses of doom, in its extremes, the benevolent life force inundates either with vengeance bordering on the colossal - tsunamis, hurricanes, floods; or with stoic temperance - leading to drought, deficiency and famine.

Speaking of water, the Lord says: "For I will pour water on the thirsty land, and streams on the dry ground; I will pour my Spirit upon your offspring, and my blessing on your descendants". So how do we explain the fact that every minute a child dies of waterborne disease? (Yes, by the time you finish reading this, there will be two children less on Earth). How do we explain the fact that 1 in every 9 persons lack access to safe drinking water? Or for a fact, that more people in the world today have a mobile phone than access to a toilet?

Welcome to the age of 'Anthropocene'. What God created, we have put asunder to gratify our greed and wanton desire to change the very Laws of Nature that were meant to sustain all His creatures. We have punctured the ozone layers; have unleashed His fury in the form of emitting greenhouse gases leading to global warming and climate change. The ice caps are melting which promise to inundate vast tracts of land and coastal regions. We have dam(n)ed the rivers, changed their courses, plundered the ground water reservoirs, contaminated the environment with our toxic wastes, devastated the fragile eco-systems and embraced climate change!

Industrial abuse has depleted the aquifers depriving agriculture and the communities that have traditionally depended on them. Add to this the unending flows of the condemned - Climate Refugees and the destitute making beelines to the cities in search of victuals that the land, their land, can no longer provide them. It is with considerable pride, we claim that we have achieved this progress (?) in less than 300 years, beginning 1760 as opposed to the millions of years that God took to enact His grand design of Creation.

The 'Rational Scientists', apologists, for those who set the house on fire with their fossil fuel guzzling economies in

the first place, are now allegedly paying for the fire fighting. They point out that although water is a finite resource, it is also a renewable one. Only 2.53 percent of Earth's water is fresh, and some two-thirds of that is locked up in glaciers and permanent snow cover. But despite the very real danger of future global water shortages, for the vast majority of the nearly one billion

people without safe drinking water, today's water crisis is not an issue of just scarcity, but of access.

Is it that simple? Perhaps it is not. For, the same Multi National Companies (MNCs) that have led us to this un-Godly state are the ones who have quietly converted a Ubiquity into a Commodity. Yes, thanks to them, water today is a packaged product that you sip from the plastic bottles they peddle - their clever advertising convincing us that they have perfected for the wealthy, what God created for all humankind. And yes, if they can have their way they will also ensure that Revelation 22:17 is expunged "... Come, and let the one who hears say, Come. And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who desires take the water of life **without price.**"

