

(Gen. 8:20) - Everything God did in the Old Testament, including destroying the wicked in the flood and sparing Noah who found grace in the eyes of the Lord, was a preparation for the coming of Christ into the world. We saw how the ark itself was a picture of Christ. It was the one way of salvation and the safety and security from the wrath of God. Even the “pitch” that was within and without to keep it from leaking and sinking was a picture of the blood atonement of Christ. The ark’s one and only door pictured Christ Who is the one and only doorway to salvation and a right relationship with God. Its one window through which light entered pictured Christ the light of His people, the light of the Gospel. Here we see Noah, after the flood waters descended, coming out of the ark, building “*an altar unto the LORD,*” and sacrificing animals. Notice that Noah sacrificed only “*clean*” animals and presented them as “*burnt offerings on the altar*” offered unto the LORD. Noah knew the way of salvation, worship, and acceptance with God was through the blood sacrifice which pictured the blood of Christ shed for their sins. The cleanness of the sacrifices pictured Christ’s sinless purity. He was made sin only by the imputation of the sins of God’s elect to Him, and they are made righteousness by the merits of His blood imputed to them. This is the Gospel message (2 Cor. 5:21).

(Gen. 8:21-22) - The LORD accepted Noah’s offerings (“*smelled a sweet savour*”). This shows how sinners can only be accepted with God in Christ and based upon the merits of His righteousness alone. This is the grace of God that reigns through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord (Rom. 5:21; Eph. 1:5-7; 1 Pet. 2:5). God, then, declared a covenant with Noah and the whole earth the terms of which are stated in *Genesis 9:8-17*.

(Gen. 9:1-6) - God gave Noah commandments and instructions for living upon the earth after the flood. He commanded Noah and his sons to “*be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth*” (Gen. 9:1,7). God’s purpose in creating the human race was to populate the earth because, before He created the earth, He had chosen a people (male and female, Jew and Gentile) to save from their sins forever by His grace through the Lord Jesus Christ. This is for God’s glory. God commanded Noah and his sons (including all his descendants) to live on and of the earth, even to eat the meat of animals as well as the edible plants (Gen. 9:2-3). He forbade them to eat raw meat (Gen. 9:4). God then pronounced the death penalty for murder. People who murdered other people, and even animals that killed people, were to be punished with death (Gen. 9:5-6). People today argue over whether or not the death penalty deters crime. It certainly does, but the death penalty is not simply a matter of deterring crime. It is a matter of justice. In the death penalty, God shows His own justice against sin which demands death. Only righteousness demands life. We have all sinned against God. We cannot murder God, but we, in essence, have sought to do so, and we all deserve eternal damnation and death. Our only hope of righteousness is the perfection of the law that can only be found in Christ.

(Gen. 9:8-17) - God promised Noah that He would never destroy the world by flood again. Just as the ark, wherein Noah and his family were delivered from God’s wrath, is typical of Christ, so here, too, we have a two-fold application, physical and spiritual. Seed time and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, along with the rainbow are all physical, tangible, and visible things which point to a much higher spiritual reality. God made a covenant of promise with Noah, his posterity, and with all living things, and its fulfillment was based solely upon God’s absolute and unconditional promise and HIS faithfulness to keep that promise. None of the conditions of this covenant were placed upon Noah, nor his

posterity, nor any living creature. This covenant, in and of itself, did not concern eternal matters, but only the fact that God would never again destroy the world by flood. All who have lived since Noah, saved and unsaved, have been partakers of this covenant (*Gen. 9:11*).

Read *Isaiah 54:9-10*. In *Isaiah 53* the prophet had established the ground of eternal salvation in the substitution and satisfaction of Christ. In *Isaiah 54:8* God speaks as the REDEEMER who exercises everlasting kindness and mercy based on Christ's work of satisfaction. In *Isaiah 54:9-10*, Isaiah refers to God's oath to Noah as a SURE AND CERTAIN PLEDGE OF HIS PROMISE OF GRACE TO ALL THE OBJECTS OF HIS LOVE. The certainty that God will destroy the earth no more with a flood and the certainty of the foundations of the hills and mountains are appealed to as proof of the certainty of God's promise of eternal salvation conditioned on Christ, and that He will save sinners for Christ's sake alone. According to this promise and based on His faithfulness to fulfill it, we are to come to God who justifies the ungodly based on the imputed righteousness of Christ, repenting of dead works and former idolatry, and expecting Him to save us and bring us to final glory based solely upon that righteousness imputed.

These promises were made by God over 4,000 years ago, and the unfailing fulfillment of them yearly, all through the centuries, is a testimony to the absolute faithfulness of God in all things, especially in His promise of eternal salvation. Each time we see a rainbow, let us remember that God sees that same rainbow and remembers His promise. It is a reminder of God's righteous judgment and wrath, while, at the same time, it reminds us of God's faithfulness in His promise of mercy and grace in Christ, the believer's ark. This is the pot of gold at the end of every rainbow. And the reason that sinners cannot find that pot of gold is because of spiritual blindness - self-righteousness, self-love and religious pride that keeps them holding onto the fool's gold of their false refuges and false hopes, of their own dead works and religious experiences. And we tell all who will listen that each time they see a rainbow, remember God is faithful to destroy any sinner who expects God to bless him based on anything other than the imputed righteousness of Christ. And God is faithful to save sinners based on that righteousness. This is visible proof of God's faithfulness (*Jer. 31:33-37; 33:14-16, 20, 25-26*).

The rainbow described in *Genesis 9:12-13* is God's creation and is the seal, or sign, of the covenant God made. We naturally delight in it. There is something awe-inspiring in the appearance of a rainbow after a storm. It is good and right that we rejoice in the rainbow as a God-ordained symbol of God's faithfulness and mercy. The attempt of some to corrupt this beautiful sign by using the colors for their own sinful purposes does not diminish the beauty and wonder of what God has made.

We should all consider another serious matter. Although God has promised not to destroy the world again with a flood, this does not mean that God will never again destroy the earth. He has promised to one day destroy the earth by fire (*2 Pet. 3:10, 11; Rev. 20:9, 21:1*) in the terrible events known as "*the day of the Lord*." In *Genesis 9:12-13* we learn that the lesson to us is that when we see a rainbow, we should always be reminded of God's faithfulness and His amazing grace that can only be found in the Lord Jesus Christ. We should also be reminded that our God is a holy and righteous God Who has a holy hatred for sin and Who will not allow sin to go unpunished forever. Also, just as God provided a way for Noah and his family to be saved in the ark, He also has provided a way for us to be saved through Jesus Christ. Noah and his family were saved from the wrath of God that came in the flood, and all who are found in Christ are saved from the "*wrath to come*" (*1 Thess. 1:10*).