**"What Does The Rainbow Say?" (Oak Ridge, May 6, 2018)**

With Brian’s class on apologetics and an upcoming gospel meeting on Evidences of God that I am preparing for, I kept thinking about the flood of Noah. This morning I would like to ask the simple question ***"What Does The Rainbow Say?"*** All people have probably seen a rainbow during or after a rainstorm. What does seeing a Rainbow say to you? If we believe in God's Word the Rainbow can teach us many things!

In **Genesis 8:18-9:17**, we read of God's promise to Noah and his family after the Flood. Noah and his family had just come off the ark and had offered sacrifices to God (**Genesis 7:2-3, 8:18-21**). God then says that He will not destroy the earth by water again (**Genesis 8:21-22**) and is going to establish a covenant to this effect with Noah, his family, and all the animals (**Genesis 9:9-11**). God then says that they can know His promise is true because he will "set" His "rainbow in the cloud" (**Genesis 9:13**). This rainbow is a reminder to God of His promise not to destroy the earth with a flood (**Genesis 9:15-16**). The rainbow not only stands for a promise God has made, it also says a number of things to us today. ***What does the rainbow say?***

**GOD IS ALIVE**

Some deny the existence of God. However, when looking at the rainbow, we see that God is! Notice **Psalm 19:1 and 90:1-2**. Looking to the New Testament, let’s read what Paul spoke in **Acts 14:15**. Let us never forget about the living God who is the Father of us all! The rainbow says “**God Is Alive**”!

**GOD KEEPS HIS PROMISES**

When God promised to destroy the earth by water, He did it (**Genesis 6:13, 17, 7:21-23**). God has promised never to do it again -- and He's kept that promise!

God’s has also promised there will be a judgment day (**2 Peter 3:5-10**). God’s judgment has come to pass with the flood, Sodom and Gomorrah, the fall of Jericho, cities like Jerusalem, Babylon, and Nineveh. The time lapse between promise and fulfillment should not be viewed as an opportunity to sin but rather as a chance to repent (**Romans 2:4**)!

God has kept His promises throughout history so we can know that God will keep His promises today. God has promised to save those who come to him in faith and obedience (**Mark 16:16**). God has promised a home in Heaven for the faithful (**Revelation 22:14**). He has also promised death and destruction to those who are disobedient (**Matthew 25:46**). We know that He will keep these promises and the rainbow tells us this!

**GOD'S WORD IS ALWAYS TRUE**

Man has come up with many theories to discount the Biblical account of the flood. One of those theories, even held by some brethren, is that the flood was only a local flood. Notice some questions that show us why the flood of Noah was a worldwide flood just as the Bible describes it.

***Why was the Ark so big if it was a local flood?*** The ark was large enough to equal 500 railroad stock cars and hold about 125,000 sheep-sized animals (**Genesis 6:14-16**). The size of the ark rules out a local flood. Less animals would be needed.

***Couldn't the animals simple migrate?*** The ark was to "keep seed alive upon the face of all the earth" (**Genesis 7:3**). All that went into the ark, its construction and stocking would be a waste of time (possibly 100 years) and energy if the flood were only a local event. Migration would have been a better and easier solution to the problem, for both Noah and the animals. Noah was commanded to take birds in the ark (**Genesis 6:20**). Birds can escape a local flood, and can migrate for thousands of miles. But none of the birds outside the ark were able to escape this flood (**Genesis 6:7**)!

***If the flood was only a local flood, why did all living organisms that breath on dry land die (Genesis 7:21-23)?*** A local flood could not have done that.

***Do local floods keep one off the land for an entire year? Would it take 7 months to run aground if this had been a local flood?*** The waters prevailed on the earth 150 days, covering the mountains (**Genesis 7:17-24**). The water continued to prevail for five months and took considerable time to recede (**Genesis 8:3-4, 14**). Noah and his family left the Ark one year and 10 days after the flood started (**compare Genesis 7:11 with 8:13-14**).

***God's promise never to send a flood again has been broken repeatedly if the flood of Noah was just a regional or local flood.***

**\*The take home message here is that God's Word is always true, no matter what theory man can come up with!**

**GOD TAKES SIN SERIOUSLY**

The rainbow teaches that God is aware of all sin and takes it very seriously (**Genesis 6:5-13**). “Great in the earth” (**verse 5**): Widespread and firmly rooted. “Only evil continually” (**verse 5**): Man had committed every sin imaginable. “I will destroy man” (**verse 7**): (NASV “blot out”), lit., to blot or wipe out by washing. “The earth was corrupt before God” (**verse 11**): Open, public, and flagrant. The flood is just one example in the Bible of the severity of God. Man may choose to reject God, but man never gets away with it. Irony - “I will destroy them with the earth” (**verse 13**). The same earth they loved destroyed them. Sadly, that will be the same for those who worship “Mother Earth” and do not worship God!

**GOD IS LONGSUFFERING**

The Rainbow reminds us of God's longsuffering and patience: up to 100 years [**Genesis 5:32, 9:28-29**] prior to judgment. During this time Noah was preaching (**2 Peter 2:4-6**). But only his wife, sons, and daughters-in-law responded to the preaching. Today God still warns people by preaching and is still longsuffering (**2 Peter 3:9**)!

**GOD WANTS A PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH YOU**

The rainbow teaches that God wants a personal relationship with you and me. After Noah offered burnt offerings on the altar to God, God blessed Noah and his sons (**Genesis 9:1**) and speaks to them (**Genesis 9:8**). Noah’s sons are told about the promise the Rainbow represents in **Genesis 9:12-15**. Noah set an example that ended up with his sons having a personal relationship with God. It is a blessing when a father or mother can lead their children to embrace a personal relationship with God. God wants a personal relationship with you! Notice **Acts 17:27 and Revelation 3:20**. ***Do you have a personal relationship with God this morning?***

**GOD GIVES GRACE TO THE FAITHFUL AND OBEDIENT**

The Rainbow teaches us that grace is granted to the faithful and obedient (**Genesis 6:8-9**). The Hebrew word translated “perfect” or “blameless” NASV involves the idea of completeness of parts, hence, a well-rounded character. Note that the word “generations” is plural. Over Noah's 500-year life so far, his character stood out from his contemporaries. We need to be impressed that Noah overcame the sinful environment that surrounded him. He refused to be conformed to the sinful world. We need to be the same way (**Romans 12:2**)!

Noah’s obedience was quick and motivated by a great respect for God (**Hebrews 11:7**). Noah did not have to see something to believe God. If we have a hard time obeying God’s will, it is probably because we are not taking Him seriously. Noah did exactly as God had commanded (**Genesis 6:22**). Noah understood that when God gives instructions, man is not permitted to add, subtract, edit, or change His commands (**Proverbs 30:5-6**).

God expects the obedient to follow a narrow way. God has executed judgment where only a few were saved, while the majority was lost forever. God did not lower His standards, even though that meant “the world” was condemned. The way is still narrow today (**Matthew 7:13-14**).

Noah did not complain of God executing His judgment. Noah certainly had friends/relatives who did not come in the ark, yet Noah never complained that God was being cruel or unfair. In addition, building the ark was a huge task that required tremendous dedication and hard work. Yet we have no record of any complaints from Noah.

**Note that Noah was saved by:**

1. **Grace (Genesis 6:8).**
2. **His Faith that moved him to Obey God’s commands (Genesis 6:22, Hebrews 11:7).**
3. **Water (1 Peter 3:20-21).**

Water was required for the salvation of Noah. Today forgiveness comes when one is baptized (or immersed in water) for the remission of sins (**Acts 2:38**). When you are baptized, your sins are washed away, and you come up out of the waters a new creature, a Christian, to live your life for Him (**Romans 6:4**)!

**Remember what the Rainbow teaches; that God gives grace to the faithful and obedient!**

### CLOSING

The Rainbow teaches us many things!

**GOD IS ALIVE**

**GOD KEEPS HIS PROMISES**

**GOD’S WORD IS ALWAYS TRUE**

**GOD TAKES SIN SERIOUSLY**

**GOD IS LONGSUFFERING**

**GOD WANTS A PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH YOU**

**GOD GIVES GRACE TO THE FAITHFUL AND OBEDIENT.**

Maybe you are a Christian who has forgotten the promises God has made to you and has forgotten the commitment you made to Him. Noah committed his life to obeying God (**Genesis 6:22**). ***Why not repent and be determined to be faithful to God?***

If you are not a Christian, **God wants a personal relationship with you today.** That relationship starts when you believe that Jesus is the Son of God (**John 8:24**), repent of your sins (**Luke 13:3**), confess the good confession that Jesus is the Son of God (**1 Timothy 6:12**), and are baptized for the remission of your sins (**Galatians 3:26-29**). This is only the beginning of your walk with God on the road that gives you meaningful life on earth and leads to eternal life in Heaven!

The rainbow was set in the heavens to remind and prepare people, and we must not forget it! We will close by reading **Ezekiel 1:26-28.** The next time you see God's bow in the sky, remember what it teaches!

If we can help you now, please come forward as we stand and sing!