

Message Nine
**The Rainbow—
the Consummation of the Experience
of the Christian Life and the Church Life**

Scripture Reading: Ezek. 1:28; Gen. 9:13; Rev. 4:2-3; 10:1; 21:19-20

I. The rainbow is a sign of God's faithfulness in keeping the covenant—Gen. 9:8-17:

- A. "I set My bow in the clouds, and it shall be for a sign of a covenant between Me and the earth"—v. 13:
1. In order to assure mankind that there would never again be a flood to destroy them and the earth, God made a covenant with Noah, with his seed, and with every animal—vv. 9-17.
 2. The rainbow is a sign that God is the One who establishes and keeps His covenant; the rainbow declares that God will keep His covenant.
 3. The rainbow, a token of God's covenant, signifies God's faithfulness; God's faithfulness is the rainbow—1 Cor. 1:9; 1 John 1:9:
 - a. God Himself is faithfulness, and He is faithful to His word—1 Cor. 10:13; 1 Thes. 5:23-24.
 - b. We have been spared by God's faithfulness, and now we have a rainbow as a sign of God's faithfulness.
- B. "There was a rainbow around the throne like an emerald in appearance"—Rev. 4:3:
1. God is the God of life (jasper) and redemption (sardius)—v. 3:
 - a. The rainbow around His throne signifies that He is the covenanting God, the faithful God, who will keep His covenant while executing His judgment upon the earth—v. 3.
 - b. God will keep a part of mankind to be the nations on the new earth for His glory—21:24, 26.
 2. The rainbow around the throne is like an emerald in appearance—4:3:
 - a. An emerald is a precious stone whose grass-green color signifies the lives on earth.
 - b. This indicates that as God is executing His judgment upon the earth, He will remember His covenant and spare some of the lives on earth, as indicated in Genesis 9:11.
- C. "I saw another strong Angel [Christ] coming down out of heaven, clothed with a cloud; and the rainbow was upon His head"—Rev. 10:1:
1. The rainbow here indicates that Christ in His judgment upon the earth will keep the covenant that God made with Noah concerning the earth—Gen. 9:8-17.
 2. The rainbow indicates also that Christ will execute judgment according to the God who sits on the throne with the rainbow around it, the faithful and covenant-keeping God—Rev. 4:2-3.

II. The experience of the Christian life and of the church life consummates in a rainbow—Ezek. 1:28; Rev. 4:3; 10:1; 21:19-20:

- A. God's eternal purpose is to work Himself in Christ into us as our life and everything so that we may take Him as our person, live Him, and express Him; this is the desire of God's heart and the focal point of the Bible—Eph. 1:9; 3:11, 16-17a; Phil. 1:20-21a:
 - 1. The central work of God is to build Himself in Christ into us, making us one with Him for His corporate expression—Gal. 4:19; Eph. 3:17a.
 - 2. Eventually, the Triune God and redeemed humanity will be united, mingled, incorporated, and built up as one entity—the New Jerusalem—Rev. 21:2, 10; 3:12.
- B. According to God's plan, the spiritual things revealed in Ezekiel 1 begin with the wind and consummate with the rainbow—vv. 4, 28:
 - 1. As a result of having a clear sky with the throne and of experiencing the man who has the appearance of electrum and a consuming fire, we will have the appearance of a rainbow—vv. 26-28.
 - 2. The rainbow is the brightness around the man who is sitting on the throne; this brightness signifies the splendor and glory around the Lord on the throne—v. 28.
- C. A rainbow can be considered as being produced from the combining of three basic colors—blue, red, and yellow:
 - 1. Blue, the color of God's sapphire throne, signifies God's righteousness; red, the color of the sanctifying fire, signifies God's holiness; and yellow, the color of electrum, signifies God's glory—Rom. 1:17; 3:21; 10:3; 6:19, 22; 3:23; 8:18, 21; 1 Cor. 1:30.
 - 2. Righteousness, holiness, and glory are the three divine attributes that keep sinners away from God—Gen. 3:24:
 - a. The sword for killing indicates God's righteousness (cf. Lam. 3:42-43; Rom. 2:5); the flame signifies God's holiness (Deut. 4:24; 9:3; Heb. 12:29); and the cherubim signify God's glory (Ezek. 9:3; 10:4; Heb. 9:5).
 - b. Because fallen man was unable to fulfill the requirements of God's righteousness, holiness, and glory, he was not permitted to contact God as the tree of life, until Christ fulfilled these requirements by His all-inclusive death on the cross to open a new and living way for us to enter into the Holy of Holies and partake of Christ as the tree of life—10:19-20; Rev. 22:14.
 - 3. The Lord Jesus died on the cross to satisfy the requirements of God's righteousness, holiness, and glory, and now, in resurrection, He is our righteousness, holiness, and glory—1 Cor. 1:30:
 - a. Righteousness issues from God for His administration (Psa. 89:14a; 97:2; Isa. 32:1); now, in Christ, we are becoming the righteousness of God (2 Cor. 5:21).
 - b. We become holy, even as God is holy (1 Pet. 1:15-16), by having God in us; we become more holy by being in God; and we become the holiest by being mingled, permeated, and saturated with God (1 Thes. 5:23).
 - c. Christ dwells in us as the hope of glory (Col. 1:27), and we are being transformed into His image from glory to glory (2 Cor. 3:18).

4. Because we are in Christ, we bear Christ as righteousness, holiness, and glory; in the sight of God we look like righteousness, holiness, and glory, and we have the appearance of a rainbow—1 Cor. 1:30.
 5. The reality of this rainbow must be wrought into us so that, as God's redeemed ones, we will have the appearance of a rainbow, bearing God's testimony; this means that we will bear God's righteousness, holiness, and glory—Ezek. 1:28; Rev. 4:2-3; 10:1; 21:19-20.
 6. Although this rainbow will be fully manifested in eternity, the spiritual reality of this bright rainbow should be manifested in the church today—1 Tim. 3:15-16:
 - a. In the church life we need to allow God to work in us, and we need to receive grace to the extent that everything becomes righteous, holy, and glorious—Phil. 2:12-13.
 - b. If we allow God's holy fire to burn away everything that does not match Him so that His holy nature is manifested as gold through our humanity, the church will be filled with God's righteousness, holiness, and glory—Eph. 3:21.
 - c. This righteousness, holiness, and glory will combine and reflect one another to form a bright rainbow expressing God and testifying for Him.
- D. The New Jerusalem has the appearance of a rainbow; the holy city looks like a rainbow—Rev. 21:19-20:
1. The colors of the twelve layers of the foundations have the appearance of a rainbow, surrounding the eternal God as His testimony; this signifies that the entire city is built upon the eternal faithfulness of the faithful God:
 - a. The New Jerusalem is built upon and secured by God's faithfulness in keeping His covenant—4:2-3; 21:19-20.
 - b. In God's economy we need to be constituted with the faithful God to be faithful even as He is faithful—1 Cor. 4:2; 7:25; 1 Tim. 1:12; 2 Tim. 2:13.
 2. As the New Jerusalem in eternity, we, the aggregate of God's saved ones, will be a rainbow testifying forever that our God is faithful—Rev. 21:2, 10, 19-20:
 - a. By God's righteousness, holiness, and glory, we will have the appearance of a rainbow declaring to the whole universe God's saving faithfulness.
 - b. When this rainbow appears, God will have the fulfillment of the desire of His heart—Eph. 1:9.
 3. This eternal rainbow will be the consummation of the experience of the Christian life and the church life—Rev. 4:2-3; 10:1; 21:19-20.