



July 22, 2007

Rainbows

Last week we began taking a look at the ways in which God has revealed himself in the physical world around us. We understand that science can explain many of the things that we view as evidences of God, but being able to describe the physical characteristics and properties of such things in no way eliminates the existence of the creator. We find ourselves caught in a world that thinks that if we understand something on the surface, then we can extrapolate these ideas to the ultimate conclusion, that there is no God. On the other hand if we appreciate the beauty of such things, and the complex scientific explanations for the physical phenomenon, then we have discovered the unique signature or fingerprint of the maker on His work. One of the most spectacular of these reminders is that of the rainbow. We find that after the creation of the world there was no rain and the ground was watered by a mist that rose in the evenings (**Gen 2.6**). We might conclude that there were no clouds in the sky at that time as well. All of this changed as God destroyed the evil of the world by means of a global flood (**Gen 6-9**). After the flood God observed *“the imagination of man’s heart is evil from his youth...”* (**Gen 8.21**). Recognizing this, God stated that he would never again destroy the world in this fashion. As a symbol of this promise God created the rainbow, setting it in the clouds, as a reminder of His promise (**Gen 9.9-17**). As we saw with the presence of thunder and lightning last week, the rainbow is a demonstration and symbol of many things. In the account of the flood, we find that the rainbow represents God’s power over the elements. God created all things and therefore should come as no surprise that he is able to modify the arrangement of the physical world when he sees fit, or, when it becomes necessary. In our time we know the rainbow is not rare but it is a scarcity, appearing for a short time following a storm. In other places we find the shimmering bands of color hovering over waterfalls and other places where water is exposed to light. We may also create them artificially, which some say is “proof” that they are only a phenomenon involving the separation of the various frequencies of light. The power of God is

further demonstrated in the possibility that the physics of the world were altered at this time as well. There are statements to the effect that God altered the atmosphere and the geography of the planet. Along with this is also the modification of other properties. The rainbow also stands as a symbol of God’s majesty and therefore his power. In the Revelation that was given to John, he describes God’s throne. *“And immediately I was in the spirit: and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne. And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone: and there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald.”* (**Rev 4.2-3**). Later in the same vision, John describes a heavenly emissary sent out from God. Note the description as this being is presented: *“And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud: and a rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire...”* (**Rev 10.1**). This angel stands on the earth and sea, then signals a judgment from God. The interesting thing about the rainbow is that it is a symbol of goodness on the other side of destruction. The only way that we will see the throne of God, or be in His presence, is by obeying him through the commands in His word. The rainbow reminds us of his presence and therefore tells us that we are never far from Him, although we might feel isolated and scared. The rainbow represents God’s ability to create, sustain and change any thing. As I was researching this article I noticed an interesting thing. The rainbow, or bow, is mentioned in two places specifically in the King James Bible. The book of **Genesis**, and the book of **Revelation**. The beginning and the end. Is God reminding us that He will sustain, change and save us through this? Makes you think.

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