

Orlando Bible Students Newsletter

Volume 22, Number 2

September 2019

The Rainbow Covenant

We have been hearing and reading in the news about global warming, the threat of more violent storms, and rising seas that could flood the earth to the point of destroying it. God, however, in the Scriptures made a covenant that “neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth.” (Gen. 9:11) The seal of this covenant of nature was the rainbow, which Noah had never seen in the clouds before. Regarding this seal of the covenant made by a divine institution, we observe several important things.

This seal is affixed with repeated assurances of the promise it was designed to ratify. “I do set my bow in the cloud and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth.” (vs. 13) “The bow shall be seen in the cloud and I will remember my covenant ... the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh.” (vss. 14,15) The bow was given so that its sight might strengthen man’s heart and confirm faith in God’s promise. “I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature.”—vs.16

A rainbow appears in the clouds when the clouds are most likely to deliver rain. It often returns after the rain; when we have most reason to fear the rain continuing. Then, God shows this seal of the promise that it will not continue. In this way God calms our fears with such encouragements that are both suitable and reasonable. The thicker the cloud the brighter the bow in the cloud. Thus, as threatening afflictions abound, encouraging

consolations abound much more.—2 Cor. 1:5,4

The rainbow appears when one part of the sky is clear, which implies mercy remembered amid wrath, and the clouds may appear to be hemmed in by the rainbow. The rainbow is caused by the refraction and dispersion of the sun’s light by rain or other water droplets in the atmosphere. This illustrates that all of the glory and significance of the seal of the covenant are derived from Christ, the “Sun of righteousness” (Mal. 4:2), who is also described with a “rainbow about his throne,” and a “rainbow upon his head.” (Rev. 4:3,10:1) This intimates, not only his majesty, but his mediatorship.

The colors of the rainbow signify God’s faithfulness (blue), Jesus’ sacrifice (red), Jesus exalted to be the “Sun of righteousness” (yellow), and the promise of life to man (green). It is a bow directed upwards toward heaven and not downwards, towards the earth. The seal of the covenant was intended to comfort man, not to terrify him. Marvelously adapted, it serves as a type of mercy following judgment—as a sign of the connection between man’s sin and God’s free and unmerited grace. As God looks upon the bow that he may remember the covenant, we, too, should also be mindful of the covenant with faith and thankfulness, for God hath truly promised, “The earth abideth forever.”—Eccles. 1:4

To learn more, see our offer for the free booklet *Science and Creation* on the back page of this newsletter. ■

Elijah

Elijah was a prophet from Tishbe in Gilead—a historical region located east of the Jordan River in present day Jordan. His name means “Yahweh is my God.” He was considered as one of the greatest prophets of Israel. He walked and talked with God and encouraged others to believe the Lord is God, just as his name purported.

He heard the word of the Lord and followed God’s direction. Often, the message was difficult and was met with opposition. Still, Elijah did not falter. He confronted face-to-face those who spent their life in the worship of Baal. In 1 Kings 18:21, *New International Version*, Elijah went before the Israelites and said, “How long will you waver between two opinions? If the LORD is God then follow him; but if Baal is God, follow him.”

Elijah following the Lord’s instruction, approached King Ahab and said, “As surely as the LORD, the God of Israel, lives—the God I serve—there will be no dew or rain during the next few years until I give the word!” (1 Kings 17:1, *New Living Translation*) Elijah then hid from King Ahab by the brook Cherith where the Lord directed ravens to bring food to Elijah and where he drank from the water from the brook. As Elijah warned, the rain stopped, and the brook and all the land dried up.

The Lord then directed Elijah to the village of Zarephath where he met a widow who would feed him. When they met, she was gathering sticks to cook her last meal. Elijah asks her to bring him some water and some bread. (vss. 10-12) She responds that she has very little flour and oil. Still, Elijah directs her to make a small loaf of bread and use the remainder of her supplies for her and her son. He assures her the Lord would provide food for them and it was so. There was always enough flour and oil left in her containers until the day the Lord sent rain to water the land again.

While in the house, the woman’s son fell gravely ill, and stopped breathing. Elijah prayed to God, and the Lord brought the boy back to life.—vss. 17-23 ■

The Prodigal Son—Luke 15:11-32

As we walk in Jesus’ footsteps, we may stray from the path he set. These failures can lead us to feel unworthy of our calling. Nevertheless, we must remember that without Christ’s sacrifice and covering, we could never be worthy. We must not allow these thoughts of discouragement to linger. They are a tool of the Adversary.

There is security in our relationship with God. He looks at us as sons and daughters. He has begotten us by his holy spirit and has provided for our justification in his sight and the Lord as our advocate.—Rom 8:31-34; 1 John 2:1,2

This reminds us of the story of the prodigal son. The prodigal son disregarded his father’s counsel, squandered his inheritance and ignored his opportunity to stay with his father. This is similar to when we sin after having embarked on walking in the narrow way. (Matt. 7:13) The prodigal son degraded himself in every way possible and ends up mucking out a pig sty and craving what the pigs eat. He and the pigs were in a similar state, but there was a big difference between the son and the pigs. The pigs could not say to (Continued on next page)

Restitution

The word restitution in Acts 3:19-21, means “to restore” back to its original condition. What is to be restored? What did mankind lose from the fall of Adam? LIFE and HEALTH. Ezekiel 18:20 reads, “The soul that sinneth, it shall die.” Romans 6:23 tells us, “The wages of sin is death.” Additionally, man lost his RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD, and DOMINION OVER THE ANIMALS AND THE EARTH.—Gen. 3:8-11,17-19,23

Nevertheless, we learn that, “the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” (Rom. 6:23) Divine justice required a perfect human life, the man Christ Jesus, to sacrifice that life, to ransom mankind from what they inherited—sin and death from the disobedience of Adam. John 3:17 tells us, “For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.” Our Lord was raised from the dead by the Heavenly Father that he might apply the merit of his sacrifice on man’s behalf. Additionally, he was seated on God’s throne and became the head of his body, the church, for the purpose of restoring the human family back to what was lost in his coming earthly kingdom.—Rom. 4:25; Eph. 1:20-23; Rev. 20:6; Rev. 14:1; Col. 1:18

“As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, afterward they that are Christ’s at his coming.” (1 Cor. 15:22,23) In Jesus’ kingdom, “All that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth.” (John 5:28) At that time mankind will be restored to health and dwell in a perfect environment because Satan will be bound for a thousand years. (Isa. 35:5-10; Rev. 20:1-3) Then, mankind will learn righteousness and obedience, and have an opportunity to rebuild that relationship with God because God will have all men to “come to a knowledge of the truth.” (1 Tim. 2:4) “All will know the Lord from the least to the greatest.” (Heb. 8:11) Then, it will be up to each individual to learn obedience and regain the perfection that was lost. “God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.”—Rev 21:4 ■

The Prodigal Son *(continued from previous page)*

themselves, “I will arise and go to my father.” (Luke 15:18) When the prodigal son came home, his father welcomed him, cleaned him up and then, celebrated his return because, despite all of his mistakes, he was still his father’s son.—vss. 20-32

The son knew that he was unworthy of this treatment. (vs. 19) Still, it did not stop him from returning to his father with repentance in his heart. The son knew he had failed, but he humbly desired to rejoin his father’s household, regardless of the position.

Paul reminds us that he, too, had failings, “What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body that is subject to death?” (Rom. 7:24, *New International Version*) Paul assures us that God is just as anxious to welcome us back if we would return to him. “There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.”—Rom. 8:1 *NIV*

Therefore, let us always remember that if we are willing to correct our path and return to God through the merit of Jesus’ sacrifice, he will be just to forgive us and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.—1 John 1:9 ■

ORLANDO BIBLE STUDENTS CHURCH
PO Box 180216
Casselberry, FL 32718-0216

Nonprofit Org.
U.S. Postage
—PAID—
Mid-FL, FL
PERMIT NO. 3532

Calendar of Events

Orlando Bible Students Convention

October 26-27, 2019

South Seminole Lodge
122 Triplett Lake Drive
Casselberry, FL 32707

For further information contact:

Orlando Bible Students

Phone: (407) 670-4189

Or contact us at our website:

www.orlandobible.org

The Orlando Bible Students is a non-denominational group that meets for Bible studies and devotions on Sunday mornings at the South Seminole Lodge, 122 Triplett Lake Drive, Casselberry, FL and in area homes during the week.

For further information call: (407) 695-6815

Special Offer

We would like to send you a complimentary copy of the booklet,

Science and Creation

This booklet describes how science agrees with the Bible's record of the creation by God of the heavens, the earth, and mankind.

For your **FREE** booklet, call (407) 695-6815 and request a copy, or fill in your address below and mail this coupon to:

Orlando Bible Students
PO Box 180216
Casselberry, FL 32718-0216

Name _____
Street _____
City _____ State _____
Zip Code _____