

WEEK 9 —OUTLINE

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

<< DAY 1 >>

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.

<< DAY 2 >>

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).

« DAY 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).

« DAY 4 »

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).

<< DAY 5 >>

- 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).

<< DAY 6 >>

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).

« WEEK 9 —DAY 1 »

Morning Nourishment

Gen. 9:9 And I Myself now establish My covenant with you and with your seed after you.

13 I set My bow in the clouds, and it shall be for a sign of a covenant between Me and the earth.

Around the throne of God is a rainbow (Rev. 4:3b). The rainbow is first mentioned in the Scriptures as a sign that the very God of life and redemption is the One who establishes and keeps His covenant (Gen. 9:12-17). That the covenant in Genesis 9 was made for the sake of the inhabited earth indicates that although God will judge this earth with its inhabitants, He still remembers His covenant concerning the earth and will keep it...The rainbow declares to us that God will keep His covenant for the sake of the earth. (CWWL, 1964, vol. 2, "A General Sketch of the New Testament in the Light of Christ and the Church, Part 4: Revelation," p. 466)

Today's Reading

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 living animal (Gen. 9:9-17). See footnote 1 on Genesis 8:22 and footnote 1 on Revelation 4:6. (Gen. 9:9, footnote 1)

What is the significance of the rainbow that God set in the cloud as a token of the covenant (Gen. 9:12-17)? It signifies God's faithfulness. God's faithfulness is the rainbow. In the last book of the Bible, the book of Revelation, the apostle John saw God sitting upon a throne, and around the throne there was a rainbow (Rev. 4:3). As the closing book of the Bible, Revelation always brings us back to the beginning of the Bible. In the first book of the Bible was a rainbow, and in the last book of the Bible we still find a rainbow. God's faithfulness remains forever. He cannot deny Himself (2 Tim. 2:13). Once He has spoken, He keeps His word. He Himself is faithfulness. First Corinthians 1:9 says, "God is faithful, through whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord," and 1 John 1:9 says, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness." God is faithful.

To what is God faithful? He is faithful to what He says. He is faithful to His word, and His word is the testament, the covenant. The covenant is simply God's Word. God is faithful in whatever He says. This is the rainbow. Whenever a cloud comes, you must call God's faithfulness to come. That means that you call out the rainbow. Whenever you feel that you are weak, you must call for God's faithfulness, saying, "O God, You are faithful. I am weak, but You must make me strong according to Your Word." We are all living under the covenant with God's faithfulness as the sure sign that the flood will not come. This is the church life.

Our Christian life and church life are absolutely a covenant life. We are under the covenant. In verse after verse of the New Testament, we find God's promises....There is a verse for every circumstance that you face. If you hold on to God's covenant, I can promise you that, regardless of what happens to you, there is a verse as a living promise for you to rely upon and live by. We all need to learn how to live under God's covenant. We should not be threatened or frightened by the clouds of our convictions, feelings, and environments. We are under God's covenant, fully under His blessing. There is no more condemnation, no more judgment, no more curse. Death has been abolished. In the church, we continually enjoy life. Everything is life. Do not be frightened about losing your job or your health. Do not be threatened by any dark or negative thing. We are the covenanted people, and we have a verse of promise to meet every situation. We must stand under the covenant and not believe in any failure, weakness, darkness, or negative thing. Our destiny is under the blood-sprinkled covenant. Hallelujah, we are the covenant people! (Life-study of Genesis, pp. 436-437)

Further Reading: Life-study of Genesis, pp. 281-286, 431-438

« WEEK 9 —DAY 2 »

Morning Nourishment

Rev. 4:3 And He who was sitting was like a jasper stone and a sardius in appearance, and there was a rainbow around the throne like an emerald in appearance.

10:1 And I saw another strong Angel coming down out of heaven, clothed with a cloud; and the rainbow was upon His head, and His face was like the sun, and His feet like pillars of fire.

In Revelation 4:3 we see that there is “a rainbow around the throne...” The rainbow is a sign of God’s covenant with man and living creatures that He will not destroy them again with the flood (Gen. 9:8-17). In Revelation, God will judge the earth with all its inhabitants. The rainbow around His throne signifies that God is the covenanting God, the faithful God, who will keep His covenant while executing His judgment upon the earth in that He will not judge mankind again with a flood nor destroy all mankind, but will keep some to be the nations of the earth for His glory (Rev. 21:24, 26). This rainbow indicates that God is faithful in His administration toward mankind. In chapter 4, God is about to judge mankind, but in exercising His judgment, He will remember His covenant with Noah. He is the judging God and He is also the covenant-keeping God. (Life-study of Revelation, p. 214)

Today’s Reading

This rainbow is “like an emerald in appearance” [Rev. 4:3]. An emerald is a precious stone having a grass-green color, which signifies the lives on earth. This indicates that while God executes His judgment upon the earth, He will still remember His covenant and spare some of the lives on earth as indicated in Genesis 9:11. An emerald, being a precious stone, is solid. God’s reminder to keep His covenant is solid. There is this solid reminder around the throne.

When John saw the throne set in heaven, he saw that “upon the throne there was One sitting; and He who was sitting was like a jasper stone and a sardius in appearance...” (Rev. 4:2-3). God on the throne has the appearance of a jasper stone. According to 21:11, jasper is “a most precious stone...clear as crystal.” Its color must be dark green, which signifies life in its richness. Jasper in 4:3, as 21:11 indicates, signifies God’s communicable glory in His rich life (John 17:22, 2). It is the appearance of God, which will also be the appearance of the holy city, New Jerusalem (Rev. 21:11). The city’s wall and first foundation are built with it (21:18-19). In the Bible green signifies life. Thus, the color of jasper indicates that the God who is sitting on the throne is the very God of life. God’s color first is green, testifying that He is the source of life.

God on the throne is also in the appearance of a sardius stone. Sardius is a most precious stone, red in color, which signifies redemption. Today, God is not only the God of life, but also the God of redemption. While jasper indicates God as the God of glory in His rich life, sardius signifies God as the God of redemption. Because we, His created ones, fell, He came in to redeem through the blood of Christ. Therefore, He has two colors—the color of life and the color of redemption. He is the life-giving God and also the redeeming God.

Let us now consider the details of Revelation 10:1-11. In this portion of the Word we have a clear vision of Christ coming to take possession of the earth. In this chapter Christ is “another strong Angel,” like the One in 7:2; 8:3; and 18:1.

Revelation 10:1 says that John saw another Angel “coming down out of heaven.” Christ is now coming down out of heaven. This vision is a hint that, before the seventh trumpet, Christ is still on His way to earth.

In this vision Christ has a “rainbow” upon “His head” [v. 1]. Here the rainbow indicates that Christ in His judgment upon the earth and in His coming to take possession of it will keep the covenant God made with Noah concerning the earth (Gen. 9:8-17). It also indicates that He is the One who will execute judgment according to the One sitting on the throne with the rainbow around it. (Life-study of Revelation, pp. 214-217, 308-309)

Further Reading: Life-study of Revelation, msg. 17

« WEEK 9 —DAY 3 »

Morning Nourishment

Ezek. 1:4 And I looked, and there came a storm wind from the north, a great cloud and a fire flashing incessantly; and there was a brightness around it...

28 Like the appearance of the rainbow that is in the cloud on a day of rain, such was the appearance of the brightness all around. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of Jehovah...

On the breastplate of the high priest in the Old Testament, the first stone was sardius and the last jasper (Exo. 28:17, 20). This signifies that God's redeemed people have their beginning in God's redemption and their consummation in God's glory of life. (Life-study of Revelation, p. 217)

Today's Reading

God's eternal purpose is to work Himself into us as our life so that we may take Him as our person, live Him, and express Him. This is the desire of God's heart; it is also the focal point of the Bible...God's intention in creating man was that man would receive God into him and take Him as his life and everything to him. For this reason, after God created man, He placed him in front of the tree of life. This indicates that God wanted man to eat of this tree, which is a symbol of God Himself as life. To eat of the tree of life is to take God into us as our life and life supply.

Our destiny in eternity future is to eat the tree of life and thereby to live God and express Him. This is God's eternal intention. (Life-study of Exodus, p. 753)

The entire Scriptures reveal not only the nature and character of God but also His purpose. In fact, the Scriptures may reveal God's purpose more than His character and nature because the entire Bible is a book showing us God's plan; it is a book unveiling the purpose of God...In brief, God's eternal purpose and intention are to have a group of living persons mingled with Himself as one to be His living, corporate expression. (CWWL, 1964, vol. 2, "A General Sketch of the New Testament in the Light of Christ and the Church, Part 1: The Gospels and the Acts," p. 145)

The main content of the New Testament is that the Triune God has an eternal economy according to His good pleasure to dispense Himself in His life and nature into His chosen and redeemed people, thereby making them His duplication so that they may express Him; this corporate expression will consummate in the New Jerusalem (Eph. 3:9; 1:9-23). The New Jerusalem, the ultimate consummation of the Bible, involves God becoming man and man becoming God in life and in nature but not in the Godhead (Rev. 21:2; 3:12). In Christ, God has become man to make man God in His life and in His nature so that the redeeming God and the redeemed man can be mingled, constituted, together to be one entity—the New Jerusalem (21:3, 22). Eventually, the triune, eternal God becomes the New Jerusalem incorporated with all of us, and we also become the New Jerusalem through the process of God's organic salvation (Rom. 5:10). The ultimate consummation of God's organic salvation is the New Jerusalem—the universal incorporation of the union and mingling of God with man, divinity with humanity—the processed and consummated Triune God incorporated with His regenerated, renewed, sanctified, transformed, conformed, and glorified tripartite elect. (The Conclusion of the New Testament, p. 4361)

In the vision in Ezekiel 1 things in the natural realm are used to describe things in the spiritual realm. These spiritual things are deep, but we can understand them through the natural and physical things that are used to describe them. According to God's plan the spiritual things revealed here begin with the wind (v. 4) and end with the rainbow (v. 28).

As a result of having a clear sky with the throne and of experiencing a man who has the appearance of electrum and a consuming fire, we will have the appearance of a rainbow...A 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. (Life-study of Ezekiel, pp. 111, 131)

Further Reading: Life-study of Revelation, msg. 26

« WEEK 9 —DAY 4 »

Morning Nourishment

Gen. 3:24 So He drove the man out, and at the east of the garden of Eden He placed the cherubim and a flaming sword which turned in every direction to guard the way to the tree of life.

1 Cor. 1:30 But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became wisdom to us from God: both righteousness and sanctification and redemption.

In His judgment and destruction of the fallen human race at the time of Noah, God spared some by His faithfulness. This also is our situation as believers in Christ...We all are fallen and deserve to be destroyed, but God has spared us. Praise the Lord that we have been spared by His faithfulness! Now we have a rainbow as a sign of God's faithfulness. Although God is a holy God and a consuming fire and none can exist in His presence, by His faithfulness we have been spared. (Life-study of Ezekiel, p. 132)

Today's Reading

It is very significant that the three primary colors of the rainbow are red, yellow, and blue because they correspond to what we have already seen in Ezekiel. The throne looks like a blue sapphire stone; the electrum is yellow; the fire is red. By their shining and refracting, these three colors combine to make a rainbow.

Blue signifies the throne. According to Psalm 89:14 the foundation of God's throne is righteousness. This indicates that the blue throne signifies the righteousness of God. Fire signifies the sanctifying, separating, and consuming fire. This means that red here refers to God's holiness. Yellow signifies God's glory in the glowing electrum. Therefore, here we have God's righteousness, holiness, and glory, signified by the colors blue, red, and yellow. God's righteousness, holiness, and glory are three divine attributes that keep sinners away from God. (Life-study of Ezekiel, p. 132)

God closed the way to the tree of life by means of three items: the cherubim, the flame, and the sword. Cherubim signify God's glory (cf. Ezek. 9:3; 10:4; Heb. 9:5), the flame signifies God's holiness (Deut. 4:24; 9:3; Heb. 12:29), and the sword for killing indicates God's righteousness (cf. Lam. 3:42-43; Rom. 2:5). These attributes of God placed requirements on sinful man. Since sinful man was unable to meet these requirements (Rom. 3:10-18, 23), he was not permitted to contact God as the tree of life, until Christ fulfilled the requirements of God's glory, holiness, and righteousness by His all-inclusive death on the cross to open a new and living way for us to enter the Holy of Holies and partake of the tree of life. (Gen. 3:24, footnote 1)

The Lord Jesus came, died on the cross to satisfy the requirements of God's righteousness, holiness, and glory, and was resurrected, and He is now our righteousness, sanctification, and redemption (1 Cor. 1:30). He is also now our glory.

We need to experience Christ in such a way that when others contact us, they can sense righteousness, holiness, and glory. This means that they should be able to sense that we have a clear sky, that we have a throne, and that we are righteous and proper, not careless or loose in any way. We should also have the electrum, glowing, shining, and weighty. Then we will have the appearance of a rainbow...As those who were fallen but who have now been saved, we have become a testimony of God's faithfulness in saving us. Every local church should bear the testimony of such a rainbow. (Life-study of Ezekiel, pp. 132-133)

Righteousness issues from God for His administration (Psa. 89:14; 97:2; Isa. 32:1). [In 2 Corinthians 5:21] this righteousness is Christ to be our righteousness (1 Cor. 1:30), making us God's righteousness in Him (not making us righteous before God). Through Christ's redemption, man, who is a sinner and is even sin, is made God's righteousness, being reconciled to the righteous God, and is made a new creation living to God for His eternal purpose. The apostles are commissioned to minister such a Christ, with all the glorious issues of His marvelous achievement, to His believers, who are the members that form His Body. Praise and glory be to Him forever! (2 Cor. 5:21, footnote 3)

Further Reading: Life-study of 1 Corinthians, msg. 13-14

« WEEK 9 —DAY 5 »

Morning Nourishment

1 Thes. 5:23 And the God of peace Himself sanctify you wholly, and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Col. 1:27 To whom God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

In the Bible the word holy should not be understood according to the natural concept...Holiness is neither sinlessness nor perfection. Holy not only means sanctified, separated unto God, but also different, distinct, from everything that is common. Only God is different, distinct, from all things in His nature. Hence, He is holy; holiness is the distinct quality of His nature, as one of His attributes.

The way God makes us holy is to impart Himself, the Holy One, into us so that our whole being may be permeated and saturated with His holy nature. For us, God's chosen ones, to be holy is to partake of His nature (2 Pet. 1:4) and to have our whole being permeated with God Himself...This makes our being holy, like God Himself is in His nature. (The Conclusion of the New Testament, p. 86)

Today's Reading

To be holy is to be separated unto God from everything other than God. It also means to be different, distinct, from all that is not God. Thus, we become not common but different. In the universe God alone is holy. He is different from everything and is distinct. Therefore, to be holy means to be one with God in His distinction. You may be sinless and perfect, but if you are not one with God, you are not holy. When God gets into us, we are holy. When we get into God, we are more holy. And when we are mingled with God, we are most holy. We become holy 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. This will eventually issue in the New Jerusalem, which is called the holy city (Rev. 21:2, 10), a city that not only belongs to God and is for God, but is filled with God, saturated with God, and one with God, a holy entity sanctified with God.

Another attribute of God is righteousness. God is righteous as well as holy. Whereas holiness is related to God's inward nature, righteousness is related to God's outward acts, ways, actions, and activities. Everything God does is righteous.

The righteousness of God is what God is in His action with respect to justice and righteousness. God is just and right. Whatever God is in His justice and righteousness constitutes His righteousness. (The Conclusion of the New Testament, pp. 86-87)

Christ, who dwells in our spirit to be our life and person, is our hope of glory. When He comes, we will be glorified in Him. This indicates that the indwelling Christ will saturate our entire being that our physical body may be transfigured and conformed to the body of His glory (Phil. 3:21). (Col. 1:27, footnote 3)

Christ is the mystery that is full of glory now. This glory will be manifested to its fullest extent when Christ returns to glorify His saints (Rom. 8:30). Hence, it is a hope, the hope of glory. Christ Himself is also this hope of glory. (Col. 1:27, footnote 5)

["Image" in 2 Corinthians 3:18 is] the image of the resurrected and glorified Christ. To be transformed into the same image is to be conformed to the resurrected and glorified Christ, to be made the same as He is (Rom. 8:29). (2 Cor. 3:18, footnote 8)

[It is] from one degree of glory to another. This indicates an ongoing process in life in resurrection. (2 Cor. 3:18, footnote 9)

In ourselves we are short of God's glory (Rom. 3:23), we are under God's righteous judgment, and we are kept away by God's holiness. But now, as believers, we are in Christ, and He has become our righteousness, holiness, and glory. Moreover, because we are in Christ, we even bear Christ as righteousness, holiness, and glory. Because we are in Christ, in the sight of God we look like righteousness, holiness, and glory. (Life-study of Ezekiel, pp. 132-133)

Further Reading: The Conclusion of the New Testament, pp. 85-91, 95-96, 111-112; The Building Work of God, ch. 9

<< WEEK 9 —DAY 6 >>

Morning Nourishment

Rev. 21:19-20 The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with every precious stone: the first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, chalcedony; the fourth, emerald; the fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, topaz; the tenth, chrysoprase; the eleventh, jacinth; the twelfth, amethyst.

Even the New Jerusalem has the appearance of a rainbow. The foundation stones of the New Jerusalem are of twelve layers, with each layer being a different color (Rev. 21:19-20). Some time ago I read an article which stated that the twelve layers of the foundation stones have the appearance of a rainbow in color...This rainbow signifies that the city is built upon and secured by God's faithfulness in keeping His covenant. This rainbow will declare for eternity that when God judged sinners according to His righteousness, He did not destroy everyone but saved many from destruction as a testimony of His faithfulness. In eternity we, the aggregate of the saved ones, will be a rainbow testifying forever that our God is righteous and faithful. (Life-study of Ezekiel, p. 133)

Today's Reading

We, God's spared ones, will be this holy city. By His righteousness, holiness, and glory, we will have the appearance of a rainbow declaring to the whole universe God's saving faithfulness. At the end of the Bible is a city whose foundation has the appearance of a rainbow surrounding the eternal God as His strong testimony. The experience of the Christian life and of the church life will consummate in such a rainbow.

When this rainbow appears, God will have the fulfillment of His heart's desire. Throughout the ages, God has been judging fallen man according to His righteous throne, His holy fire, and His glorious nature. Nevertheless, God has saved some to such an extent that they have become a bright rainbow reflecting His glory and testifying of Him and His faithfulness forever. The appearing of this rainbow indicates that heaven and earth have been connected and that God and man have been joined. Around the throne in the New Jerusalem, there will be a group of people who have received salvation because of God's faithfulness, and for eternity they will be a rainbow reflecting the brightness of God's righteousness, holiness, and glory. At this point, God's eternal plan will have been accomplished.

Although this rainbow will be manifested in eternity, the spiritual reality of this bright rainbow should be manifest in the church today. 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 pure, just, and holy. This means that God's holy fire must burn away everything that does not match God so that God's nature is manifested as bright gold in and through the humanity of the brothers and sisters. Then the church will be filled with God's righteousness, holiness, and glory.

This should not be merely a teaching to us. Rather, the reality of this rainbow must be wrought into us so that, as God's spared ones, we will bear the appearance of a rainbow, bearing God's testimony and declaring God's faithfulness to the entire universe. This means that we will bear God's righteousness, holiness, and glory.

Ezekiel said that what he saw was the appearance of the glory of the Lord. "When I saw it, I fell on my face and I heard the voice of someone speaking" (Ezek. 1:28b). If we want to hear the word of the Lord in the following chapters of Ezekiel, we all need to come to the same point—under a clear sky in front of the throne with a man sitting on it and bearing the shining and reflecting rainbow. This is the place where we can hear the voice from above. Being here positions us to hear the voice speaking from the heavens. I hope that every one of us will come to this point, and I also hope that all the local churches will also be here. Then the Lord will have a way to speak to us. (Life-study of Ezekiel, pp. 133-135)

Further Reading: Life-study of Ezekiel, pp. 131-135; Life-study of Revelation, msg. 62; The Conclusion of the New Testament, msg. 429

Hymns, #18

How faithful and trustworthy too

Worship of the Father — His Faithfulness

18

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| <p>2. No turning shadow could there be,
Nor any change with Thee;
As Thou hast been, and now Thou art,
Forever Thou wilt be.</p> | <p>6. If, due to self, I trust Thee not,
Yet Thou art faithful still;
Thou never canst deny Thyself,
Thy word Thou shalt fulfill.</p> |
| <p>3. Thy word, as certain as Thyself,
Can never pass away;
Though heav'n and earth shall disappear,
Thy word abides for aye.</p> | <p>7. As Thou art faithful to perform
Thy promise and Thy call;
So, feeding on Thy faithfulness,
I take Thyself withal.</p> |
| <p>4. Thy gifts without repentance are,
Thy calling is the same;
Thy grace forever lasting is,
Thy mercy as Thy name.</p> | <p>8. The rainbow round about Thy throne
Thy faithfulness declares;
This attribute forevermore
The holy city bears.</p> |
| <p>5. Thy word with Thine own faithfulness
A surety is to me;
By it, with Thy salvation true,
I have the certainty.</p> | |