

The Meaning and Purpose of the Rainbow – by Rev. Tom Aicken

In recent years the bright colours of the rainbow have become the symbol of the LGBTQ community. To many people, this means little more than a welcome sign and familiar reminder of “the need”, as they see it, to honour diversity and inclusiveness, to discourage bullying and whatever breeds division. In point of fact, however, this symbol of the rainbow is intended by lesbians and gays to do much more than that; it’s used to legitimize and promote their agenda, which it’s clearly doing, and, as often demonstrated, they regularly employ bullying and coercive shaming in order to achieve their goals.

There is something ironic about all this, because God Himself has given us the rainbow and has revealed to us its meaning and purpose in the Book of Genesis. God promised, “While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, winter and summer, and day and night shall not cease” (Genesis 8:22). “Never again,” He said to Noah, “shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of the flood; never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth” (Genesis 9:11). This is known as the Noahic covenant because it was given to Noah after the flood, a covenant between God and every living creature on the earth, and the sign of this covenant was the rainbow which was to remind, not simply men but even the Lord God Himself, of what He had promised (Genesis 9:15,16).

Before proceeding any further, however, there are three questions we need to address. Let’s look at them. First, why does the Lord make this covenant with all living creatures on the earth? Why is the earth so indispensable in His plan that He should sustain it and see it through to the fulfilment of its intended purpose? The answer to that question is found in the Parable of the Wheat and the Tares (Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43). Even the tares (the sons of the wicked one) are to be preserved, at least for a time, so that the wheat (the sons of God’s kingdom) will not be uprooted with them. So precious in God’s sight are believers, all those who receive a saving interest in Christ and are counted righteous for His sake, that they are protected – the Lord works all things together for their good, for the good of those who love Him and are called according to His purpose – until they shine forth as the sun in their Father’s kingdom.

Second, why does the Lord need to remind Himself of what He has promised in this covenant? Does He not know all things, everything at the same time, and not need therefore ever to remind Himself of anything? It's true, He doesn't need to be reminded. The Lord forgets nothing, except what He willfully overlooks in forgiving His people, yet the fact that He deliberately reminds Himself of His promise to preserve the earth, to sustain His creatures until all His elect people are saved to sin no more, tells us how important this promise is to Him. It tells us that all whom the Father gives to His Son will indeed come to Him, and that each and every one who seeks refuge in Christ will never be cast out. If this promise is so important to God, that none of all His own can ever be lost, should it not be a great comfort to us, His people, and should it not be a compelling reminder to us of our present and eternal security? As we read in Numbers 23:19, "God is not a man that He should lie, nor a son of man that He should repent. Has He said, and will He not do? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?"

Third, why does the Lord select a rainbow as the sign to portray and declare His covenant promise of preserving the earth to the ongoing generations of men? It's of interest to note that there is no special word for rainbow in Hebrew. The word for 'rainbow' in Genesis 9 is the same word for 'bow', as in bow and arrow, and so it is translated in the KJV. Keeping this in mind, the question now becomes, 'Why does the Lord hang a bow in the sky as the sign of His covenant promise to preserve life here on the earth "until (as we read in 2 Peter 3:7) the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men"?' Perhaps the question now answers itself.

"The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" (Genesis 6:5), and so He took up His bow, as it were, the symbol of His warfare, and destroyed all life on the earth as it had previously been through the devastation of a worldwide flood. As any soldier from ancient times returned from the battlefield and hung up his bow over the mantle – profound imagery to show, at least for then, that the war was over – so, too, the Lord returned from battle, hung up His bow in the sky, and declared that His war on the sons of Adam was over until the final judgment at the end of the world.

Do you see the irony of the LGBTQ community adopting the rainbow as their symbol? They would be hard-pressed to find any representation more self-defeating to their cause. From the beginning, God ordained marriage to be the union of a man and a woman, and He ordained procreation within marriage as the means to establish a family and so extend their line to the end of the world (See Genesis 1&2). That is God's own plan, and to introduce any immorality or perversion of that order is to do so to one's own peril and everlasting condemnation. Paul wrote the church in Corinth, "Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolators, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God" (1 Corinthians 6:9,10).

This is not to say that homosexuals and all these others may not be saved. Indeed, many homosexuals are being saved – all those who are saved have put away their homosexuality; many, in turn, have even become heterosexuals – but either way, those who are saved have not only put away their sin but have sought and found refuge in Christ. Paul went on in that same letter to the Corinthian Christians, "And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God" (1 Corinthians 6:11).

It may be that you yourself are gay. This doesn't mean that you are sub-human, that you haven't been created in the image of God along with everybody else, nor does it imply that you must be regarded as a social outcast. Nothing of the sort. But you should understand that a gay lifestyle is not right with God, that you must put away that sin – along with everything else that is displeasing to Him, as we all must – in order to receive Christ as your Saviour and to serve Him as your Lord. "Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). You should know at the same time, that the Lord Jesus Christ is "able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him" (Hebrews 7:25), and "the one who comes to Me," He has promised, "I will by no means cast out" (John 6:37). Come to Christ, unbeliever, commit everything you are and have to Him, believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and be saved!