

The Sign of the Covenant:

A 5-Day Devotional from Genesis 9:12-17

Day 1 — God Gives Visible Signs to Confirm His Promises

Read: Genesis 9:12–13; Genesis 17:10–11; Exodus 12:13; Luke 22:19–20

Devotional (approx. 330 words):

God knows our hearts are weak and our memories are short. That’s why throughout Scripture, He graciously provides visible signs to confirm His covenant promises. These signs are God’s way of strengthening faith, giving us something tangible to look at when fear or doubt creeps in.

For Noah, God gave the rainbow. For Abraham, He gave circumcision as the sign that his descendants were set apart. For Israel under Moses, He gave the blood of the Passover lamb and the Sabbath as reminders of His deliverance and holiness. For David, the throne itself pointed forward to the promise of an eternal King. And in Christ, God has given His church baptism and the Lord’s Supper as covenant signs that proclaim the gospel until He returns.

Augustine called these “visible words.” They are outward, physical confirmations of inward, spiritual promises. They don’t replace God’s Word; they reinforce it.

The rainbow was the first of these covenant signs. Every time Noah and his family looked up at the sky after a storm, they had visible reassurance that God had not forgotten His promise. And the same God who stooped down to confirm His covenant with Noah has stooped down to confirm His covenant with us in Christ.

Reflection Questions:

1. Why do you think God provides visible signs of His promises?
2. How do baptism and the Lord’s Supper serve as “visible words” for believers today?
3. How does the rainbow encourage you personally when you see it?

Practical Application:

Next time you see a rainbow, pause and say out loud: “God always keeps His promises.” Teach your children or grandchildren to do the same.

Prayer:

Father, thank You for giving visible reminders of Your promises. Strengthen my weak heart when I doubt, and help me to rest in Your covenant faithfulness. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

Day 2 — The Rainbow as Reassurance in the Storm

Read: Genesis 9:14–15; Exodus 2:24; Luke 1:72; Psalm 46:1–3

Devotional:

Storm clouds can stir fear. For Noah and his children, dark skies must have recalled the flood — the judgment that swept the whole earth. But God set the rainbow in the clouds to reassure them. The very place where judgment once poured out became the place where mercy now appeared.

God said, “*When I see the bow in the clouds, I will remember my covenant.*” This does not mean that God forgets. In Scripture, God’s “remembering” always means acting faithfully on His promises. When Israel groaned in slavery, God “remembered His covenant” and delivered them (Ex. 2:24). When Zechariah sang at the birth of Christ, he rejoiced that God had remembered His holy covenant and sent the Redeemer (Luke 1:72).

The rainbow turns fear into reassurance. What was once a symbol of wrath becomes a canvas of mercy. Every time you see a rainbow, God is saying to you: “*I remember My covenant. My mercy still stands.*”

Reflection Questions:

1. Why was the rainbow especially reassuring for Noah’s family after the flood?
2. What does it mean that God “remembers” His covenant?
3. How does God reassure you in your moments of fear or doubt?

Practical Application:

When you face storms in life, remind yourself: God’s mercy frames the storm. His promises are louder than my fears.

Prayer:

Lord, thank You that when storms rise, You reassure me with Your mercy. Teach me to rest in the God who remembers His covenant. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

Day 3 — God's Ultimate Remembrance in Christ

Read: Genesis 9:15; Luke 1:72–73; Hebrews 9:26; Romans 8:32

Devotional:

The rainbow was a sign that judgment was restrained — God promised never again to destroy the world by flood. But His ultimate remembrance was not to restrain judgment forever; it was to send His Son to bear judgment once for all.

Zechariah's song in Luke 1 rejoiced that God had sent the Messiah *"to show the mercy promised to our fathers and to remember His holy covenant."* God remembered His promise not just to Noah, but to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and all His people. And He fulfilled it by sending Jesus Christ.

At the cross, judgment fell so that mercy could flow. Hebrews 9:26 says Christ *"appeared once for all at the end of the ages to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself."* The rainbow said judgment would be restrained; the cross says judgment is satisfied. God's wrath was poured out on His Son so that grace might be poured out on us.

Every rainbow points us to the cross. Just as God looked on the bow and remembered His covenant with Noah, He looks on the cross and remembers His covenant of grace sealed in Christ's blood.

Reflection Questions:

1. What's the difference between judgment restrained and judgment satisfied?
2. How does the rainbow point us to Christ?
3. What does Hebrews 9:26 teach us about the finality of Christ's sacrifice?

Practical Application:

When guilt or shame weighs you down, remember: the rainbow says judgment is restrained, but the cross says judgment is satisfied. Rest in Christ's finished work.

Prayer:

Father, thank You that in Christ judgment has been satisfied and mercy flows forever. Help me to rest in His finished work on my behalf. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Day 4 — The Everlasting Covenant

Read: Genesis 9:16–17; Genesis 8:22; Isaiah 54:9–10; 2 Corinthians 1:20

Devotional:

God calls the covenant with Noah “everlasting.” As long as the earth endures, His promise holds: the rhythm of creation — seedtime and harvest, summer and winter, day and night — will not cease. This covenant secures history so redemption can unfold.

Twice in Genesis 9, God says, “*This is the sign of the covenant.*” Repetition drives home His certainty. Unlike human agreements that fail, God’s word is unbreakable. His mercy preserves the world until His redemptive purposes are complete.

Isaiah 54 echoes this covenant: “*This is like the days of Noah to me: as I swore that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth, so I have sworn that I will not be angry with you.*” God’s everlasting covenant points forward to Christ, in whom every promise is “Yes and Amen” (2 Cor. 1:20).

Every rainbow, every sunrise, every season preaches: God keeps His promises. His covenant mercy endures forever.

Reflection Questions:

1. What does it mean that God’s covenant with Noah is everlasting?
2. Why does God repeat the phrase “this is the sign of the covenant”?
3. How does this covenant reassure you about God’s faithfulness today?

Practical Application:

Keep a journal this week of ways God shows His faithfulness in daily rhythms — sunrise, meals, relationships — and thank Him for His everlasting mercy.

Prayer:

Lord, thank You that Your covenant mercy endures as long as the earth remains. Help me to live with confidence in Your everlasting promises. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

Day 5 — From the Rainbow to the Throne of God

Read: Revelation 4:3; Colossians 1:20; Hebrews 12:28; Philippians 3:20–21

Devotional:

The rainbow is not just about the past; it points to eternity. John's vision in Revelation 4 shows a rainbow encircling God's throne — not a half-arch but a full circle, surrounding the Lord of glory. What began in Noah's day as a sign of preservation becomes in heaven a sign of consummation.

On earth, the rainbow reminded Noah that creation would endure. In heaven, the rainbow declares that God's mercy frames His eternal reign. What we see now in part, we will one day experience in full — dwelling forever under the complete circle of God's covenant mercy.

And how do we get there? Through Christ. Colossians 1:20 tells us that God has reconciled all things through Christ, *“making peace by the blood of His cross.”* The rainbow delays judgment, but the cross secures salvation, and the throne in Revelation shows that mercy has triumphed forever.

Believer, every rainbow is a glimpse of glory. One day, we will stand around that throne, worshiping the Lamb who was slain, surrounded by covenant mercy that never ends.

Reflection Questions:

1. How does Revelation 4:3 deepen your understanding of the rainbow?
2. How does the rainbow point us forward to our eternal hope in Christ?
3. How should this truth shape how you live today?

Practical Application:

When you see a rainbow this week, pause to worship. Say, “Lord, this is a glimpse of glory — help me live today in light of eternity.”

Prayer:

Father, thank You that the rainbow points me to Your throne, where mercy reigns forever. Help me to live with eternal hope until the day I see Christ face to face. In Jesus' name, Amen.