

## THE HOLY SPIRIT

### “The Rainbow: Covenant and Warfare”

#### Introduction – Gen 9:8-17

Gen 9:8-17

8 Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him:

9 "I now establish my covenant with you and with your descendants after you

10 and with every living creature that was with you--the birds, the livestock and all the wild animals, all those that came out of the ark with you--every living creature on earth.

11 I establish my covenant with you: Never again will all life be cut off by the waters of a flood; never again will there be a flood to destroy the earth."

12 And God said, "This is the sign of the covenant I am making between me and you and every living creature with you, a covenant for all generations to come:

13 I have set my **rainbow**<sup>1</sup> [KJV – bow] in the clouds, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and the earth.

14 Whenever I bring clouds over the earth and the **rainbow**<sup>1</sup> appears in the clouds,

15 I will remember my covenant between me and you and all living creatures of every kind. Never again will the waters become a flood to destroy all life.

16 Whenever the **rainbow**<sup>1</sup> appears in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and all living creatures of every kind on the earth."

17 So God said to Noah, "This is the sign of the covenant I have established between me and all life on the earth." NIV

*When we examined the shekinah cloud of glory, one of the things we discovered was that the cloud was a place of covenant reminder. The rainbow was the sign of the covenant between God and all living things. This sign (also translated miracle in Num 14:22 – used with circumcision also) appeared in the clouds for us as a reminder of God’s covenant. But it is a sign for both God and us.*

Rev 4:1-3

1 After this I looked, and there before me was a door standing open in heaven. And the voice I had first heard speaking to me like a trumpet said, "Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this."

2 At once I was in the Spirit, and there before me was a throne in heaven with someone sitting on it.

3 And the one who sat there had the appearance of jasper and carnelian. A rainbow, resembling an emerald, encircled the throne. NIV

*A rainbow encircles the throne of God (see Ezk. 1:26-28). The reminder of the covenant is ever before Him and on Him as well.*

Rev 10:1

Then I saw another mighty angel coming down from heaven. He was robed in a cloud, with a **rainbow above his head**; his face was like the sun, and his legs were like fiery pillars. NIV

*Our Lord is crowned with a rainbow! I was meditating on these realities and their possible significance when the following insights came to me (which I share with you just as I wrote them down while driving):*

- Covenant is the warfare ground.
- Rainbow – lightning.
- Angel crowned with rainbow.
- Stand fast therefore.

*The clarification of this insight (a rhema to my spirit from God, I believe) is as follows:*

- Covenant promise is the ground on which we stand in spiritual warfare. The signs (or seals) of the covenants become the weapons of our warfare.

*What led me to this conclusion was that lightning bolts are called the arrows of God. If they be the arrows, then what be the bow, I asked myself? What other bow appears in the clouds except the rainbow? None. In the original language, the word used in Genesis isn't a special word meaning "rainbow," rather it is the same word used for the regular, arrow shooting bow.*

## I. Rainbows and Bows

Gen 9:13 KJV

I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth.

### A. The Arrows of God

Ps 18:13-14

13 The LORD thundered from heaven; the voice of the Most High resounded.

14 He shot his arrows and scattered [the enemies], great bolts of lightning and routed them. NIV

Ps 144:5-6

5 Part your heavens, O LORD, and come down; touch the mountains, so that they smoke.

6 Send forth lightning and scatter [the enemies]; shoot your arrows and rout them. NIV

*God is firing lightning from His cloud in warfare and judgment. The bow is the rainbow, reminding us that even in warfare, our God is a covenant keeping God and mercy is sure to follow judgment.*

### B. Faulty Bows and Sin

Ps 78:9-10

9 The men of Ephraim, though armed with bows, turned back on the day of battle;

10 they did not keep God's covenant and refused to live by his law. NIV

*The psalmist compares turning back on the day of battle while armed (with a bow) to turning away from God's covenant. Ephraim's (in place for all Israel – northern kingdom) breach of covenant is also recorded by the prophet Hosea.*

Hos 7:13-16

- 13 Woe to them, because they have strayed from me! Destruction to them, because they have rebelled against me! I long to redeem them but they speak lies against me.
- 14 They do not cry out to me from their hearts but wail upon their beds. They gather together for grain and new wine but turn away from me.
- 15 I trained them and strengthened them, but they plot evil against me.
- 16 **They do not turn to the Most High; they are like a faulty bow.** Their leaders will fall by the sword because of their insolent words. For this they will be ridiculed in the land of Egypt. NIV

*In not turning to the Most High, they are compared to a faulty (a slack or treacherous bow – one that lacks the strength or quality to hit the mark) bow. The primary word for sin in the New Testament means just that, to fail to hit the mark with an arrow! [See below]*

*Robertson's Word Pictures in the New Testament-*

The substantive hamartia (NT:266) is from the verb hamartanein (NT:264) **and means missing the mark as with an arrow.**

Ps 78:55-57, 67-72 NIV

- 55 He drove out nations before them and allotted their lands to them as an inheritance; he settled the tribes of Israel in their homes.
- 56 But they put God to the test and rebelled against the Most High; they did not keep his statutes.
- 57 Like their fathers they were disloyal and faithless, **as unreliable as a faulty bow.**
- 67 Then he rejected the tents of Joseph, he did not choose the tribe of Ephraim;
- 68 but he chose the tribe of Judah, Mount Zion, which he loved.
- 69 He built his sanctuary like the heights, like the earth that he established forever.
- 70 He chose David his servant and took him from the sheep pens;
- 71 from tending the sheep he brought him to be the shepherd of his people Jacob, of Israel his inheritance.
- 72 And David shepherded them with integrity of heart; with skillful hands he led them.

*Because of the unreliable bow of Ephraim, God placed his people into the skillful hands of David from the tribe of Judah.*

Ps 18:34 “He trains my hands for battle; my arms can bend a bow of bronze.” NIV

C. Judah, the Battle Bow

Zech 9:9-17

- 9 Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Zion! Shout, Daughter of Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and having salvation, gentle and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

- 10 I will take away the chariots from Ephraim and the war-horses from Jerusalem, and the battle bow will be broken. He will proclaim peace to the nations. His rule will extend from sea to sea and from the River to the ends of the earth.
- 11 As for you, because of the blood of my covenant with you, I will free your prisoners from the waterless pit.
- 12 Return to your fortress, O prisoners of hope; even now I announce that I will restore twice as much to you.
- 13 I will bend Judah as I bend my bow and fill it with Ephraim. I will rouse your sons, O Zion, against your sons, O Greece, and make you like a warrior's sword.
- 14 Then the LORD will appear over them; his arrow will flash like lightning. The Sovereign LORD will sound the trumpet; he will march in the storms of the south,
- 15 and the LORD Almighty will shield them. They will destroy and overcome with slingstones. They will drink and roar as with wine; they will be full like a bowl used for sprinkling the corners of the altar.
- 16 The LORD their God will save them on that day as the flock of his people. They will sparkle in his land like jewels in a crown.
- 17 How attractive and beautiful they will be! Grain will make the young men thrive, and new wine the young women. NIV

*Verse 9 of this prophecy was fulfilled when Jesus entered Jerusalem triumphantly (Matt 21:1-9). He will surely fulfill the rest as well. Note from verse 11 that it is the blood of the covenant that sets the Lord to war.*

Zech 10:4

From Judah will come the cornerstone, from him the tent peg, from him the battle bow, from him every ruler. NIV

*Our Lord Jesus is not only the Lion of the tribe of Judah, he is also the battle bow! Covenant is the ground of His warfare and the seal of the covenant is His weapon (Zech 9:14). Because of this, we need to understand covenant.*

## II. Progressive Development of the Covenants<sup>1</sup>

### A. Definition of Covenant

#### 1. Definition

“The word ‘covenant’ signifies a mutual understanding between two or more parties, each binding himself to fulfill obligations. In every case in Scripture when a covenant was instituted between God and man, God is seen as the initiator. It is a contract between God and man drawn up by God and presented to man. Man can either accept it or reject it, but he cannot change it.”

#### 2. Kinds of Covenant

There are two basic kinds of Divine Covenants in Scripture: unconditional and conditional.

<sup>1</sup> These insights and information I owe to Kevin Connor and Ken Malmin, *Interpreting the Scriptures*, Bible Temple Publishing, Portland, Oregon, 1983, p. 77-83

The unconditional covenants God will do regardless of what man does. Their hallmark phrase is “I will.”

The conditional covenants are those in which God obligates himself to fulfill the promises of the covenant only upon man’s obedience to the conditions set forth by God. The formula for a conditional covenant is “If . . . then . . .”

### 3. Parts of Covenant

*Covenants have three major parts or elements to them. These are:*

- i. Words of the covenant
- ii. Blood of the covenant
- iii. Seal (or sign) of the covenant

#### B. Examination of the Covenants

1. Everlasting Covenant - seal: [eternal life](#) weapon: [Rev 12:11](#)  
(Heb 13:20-21)

*The everlasting covenant is the overarching covenant of the eternal redemptive purposes of the Godhead. All the other covenants are a progressive revelation of aspects of the eternal covenant.*

*Seal of the covenant: Titus 1:2; 2 Tim 1:9*

*Eternal life is a weapon because once we realize that they can’t kill, no weapon formed against us can prosper.*

Rev 12:11

They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; **they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death.** NIV

2. Edenic Covenant - seal: [tree of life](#) weapon: [Rev 2:7; 22:14](#)  
(Gen 1:26-30; Hos 6:7)

*The Edenic covenant was the covenant God made with man in the garden. It is the covenant that Adam broke (Hos 6:7). The seal is a weapon because freely eating of the tree of life should keep us from the tree of knowledge of good and evil and the lie, “thou shalt surely not die.”*

Rev 2:7

He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. **To him who overcomes, I will give the right to eat from the tree of life,** which is in the paradise of God. NIV

Rev 22:14

"Blessed are those who wash their robes, that they may have the right to the tree of life and may go through the gates into the city. NIV

3. Adamic Covenant - seal: [coat of skins](#) weapon: [Rom 13:14](#)  
(Gen 3:1-24)

*Seal of the covenant: Gen 3:21*

*The Lord clothed Adam and Eve with the skin of an animal as a prophetic type of being clothed with the Lord Jesus Christ.*

Rom 13:12-14

12 The night is nearly over; the day is almost here. So let us put aside the deeds of darkness and **put on the armor of light.**

13 Let us behave decently, as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and debauchery, not in dissension and jealousy.

14 Rather, **clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ,** and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the sinful nature. NIV

*Being clothed with the Lord Jesus Christ is our armor of light for the spiritual battle. When we are clothed with Him, Romans 16:20 becomes a reality.*

Rom 16:20

**The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet.** The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you. NIV

4. Noahic Covenant - seal: [rainbow](#) weapon: [Rev 10:1](#)  
(Gen 8-9)

*We've discussed this one at length already. I just wanted to add one other verse.*

1 Peter 4:10

As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. KJV

*The word "manifold" means multicolored. The rainbow is a picture of God's grace and reminds us that there is mercy even in judgment.*

5. Abrahamic Covenant - seal: [circumcision](#) weapon: [1 Sam 17:26](#)  
(Gen 12:1-3; 15; 17; 22)

*We receive the sign of this covenant by being circumcised in our hearts by the Spirit (Rom 2:28-29). Circumcision was used as a deceptive weapon against Shechem (Gen 34).*

1 Sam 17:26

David asked the men standing near him, "What will be done for the man who kills this Philistine and removes this disgrace from Israel? **Who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he should defy the armies of the living God?"** NIV

Acts 7:51

"You stiff-necked people, with uncircumcised hearts and ears! You are just like your fathers: You always resist the Holy Spirit!" NIV

6. Mosaic Covenant - seal: [Sabbath](#) weapon: [Matt 12:12; Acts 10:38](#)  
(Ex 20-40)

Matt 12:12

How much more valuable is a man than a sheep! Therefore it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath." NIV

Acts 10:38

how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and how he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him. NIV

7. Palestinian Covenant - seal: [Early and latter rain](#) Weapon: [James 5:1-8](#)  
(Deut 27-30)

*Sign of the covenant: Deut 11; 28-29*

*As the rain for the autumn and spring seasons guaranteed the summer and winter crops, so the outpouring of the Spirit signifies the harvests at the end of the age.*

James 5:1-8

1 Now listen, you rich people, weep and wail because of the misery that is coming upon you.

2 Your wealth has rotted, and moths have eaten your clothes.

3 Your gold and silver are corroded. Their corrosion will testify against you and eat your flesh like fire. You have hoarded wealth in the last days.

4 Look! The wages you failed to pay the workmen who mowed your fields are crying out against you. The cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord Almighty. [Lord of hosts]

5 You have lived on earth in luxury and self-indulgence. You have fattened yourselves in the day of slaughter.

6 You have condemned and murdered innocent men, who were not opposing you.

7 Be patient, then, brothers, until the Lord's coming. See how the farmer waits for the land to yield its valuable crop and how patient he is for the autumn and spring rains.

8 You too, be patient and stand firm, because the Lord's coming is near. NIV

8. Davidic Covenant - seal: [Sun and moon](#) weapon: [Josh 10:12-13](#)  
(2 Sam 7:4-29; Ps 89)

*Seal: Ps 89:27-37*

*The sun and the moon signify the eternal kingdom of Messiah. Kingdom means dominion and thus conquest. In the book of Joshua, a prophetic type of this principle is given us in Scripture.*

Josh 10:12-13

12 On the day the LORD gave the Amorites over to Israel, Joshua said to the LORD in the presence of Israel: "O sun, stand still over Gibeon, O moon, over the Valley of Aijalon."

13 **So the sun stood still, and the moon stopped, till the nation avenged itself on its enemies**, as it is written in the Book of Jashar. The sun stopped in the middle of the sky and delayed going down about a full day. NIV

9. New Covenant - seal: **the Holy Spirit** Weapon: **2 Cor 10:4**  
(Matt 26:26-29; Heb 8-9; Jer 31:31-34)

*The seal:*

Eph 1:13

And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked **in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit**, NIV

*The weapon:*

2 Cor 10:4

The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, **they have divine power to demolish strongholds**. NIV

### C. Application of the Covenants

*All of the covenants must be understood and interpreted by us in light of the new covenant. Many of the covenants overlap. As New Covenant believers, we also live under the Noahic, Abrahamic, Davidic, and Everlasting Covenant. Even those that are "fulfilled" still have their application in our lives in light of the New Covenant.*

## III. Conclusion

### A. Synopsis of Covenant Warfare

*The Principle:*

The covenant is the promise between God and man by which God's grace is shown to man and man can access the blessings of God.

**Thus:** Covenant promise is what the thief seeks to steal (by killing, destroying, or lying) to hamper the redemptive work of God.

**Thus:** Covenant ground is the battleground. So long as we stand on covenant, we are on solid ground with which to stand against the devil's schemes.

**Therefore:** The sign of the covenant becomes the weapon of our warfare.

B. Jesus, the Yes and Amen

*A covenant is a promise. In dealing with promises from God, we need to remember one thing.*

2 Cor 1:19-20

19 For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by me and Silas and Timothy, was not "Yes" and "No," but in him it has always been "Yes."

20 For no matter how many promises God has made, they are "Yes" in Christ. And so through him the "Amen" is spoken by us to the glory of God. NIV

C. Standing on the Promises

*When it is all said and done:*

Eph 6:10-13

10 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power.

11 Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes.

12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.

13 Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. NIV

Amen! [SHARE THE GRACE]