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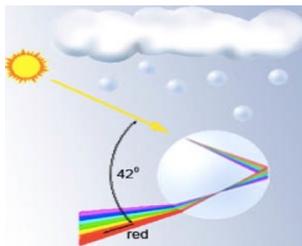
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Rainbows and the Rainbow Covenant

By David DeWitt

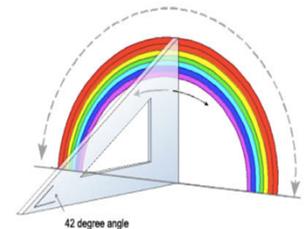
*This is the sign of the covenant which I am making between Me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all successive generations; I set **My bow in the cloud**, and it shall be for a sign of a covenant between Me and the earth. It shall come about, **when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow will be seen in the cloud**, and I will remember My covenant, which is between Me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and never again shall the water become a flood to destroy all flesh. **When the bow is in the cloud**, then I will look upon it, to remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth. And God said to Noah, this is the sign of the covenant which I have established between Me and all flesh that is on the earth (Genesis 9:12-17).*

A rainbow is not a “thing” which goes about appearing from place to place, like a tornado or a hurricane. It’s an **optical phenomena** created by certain conditions. It will be visible anywhere when those conditions are right. Those conditions can even be arranged in a person’s own back yard, with their back to the sun squirting a fine spray of water in the air. Only three things are needed, sunlight, raindrops, and viewers positioned in such a way that the sunlight is behind them and the raindrops in front of them.



Sunlight has many wavelengths, which appear as colors. When sunlight enters a drop of rain it’s light slows down because of the water, so it bends and hits the back of the drop at an angle which bounces some of it back into the drop and some of it out at a 42-degree angle from the sun. During this journey some light bends more, some less. When it exits the drop, the longest wavelength will be red, exiting at a 42-degree

angle to the viewer. The shortest will be the blue tones at 40 degrees. The red colors will always appear at the top of the rainbow; the blue colors always appear at the bottom. In order to see the rainbow, the viewer must be able to see the sun shining on raindrops between these angles.



A rainbow is actually a sphere (because raindrops are spheres), which appears as a part of a flat circle, which is actually a round ball. It would appear as a complete circle except the ground cuts the sphere in half. If the viewing angle is right, a full circle rainbow can be seen.

Four times God associates the rainbow with a cloud. Of course rain comes from clouds. So you will not

~I set My bow in the cloud
~When I bring a cloud over the earth
~The bow will be seen in the cloud
~When the bow is in the cloud

see a rainbow in the sky without some sort of clouds to produce the rain. But somewhere else in the sky, behind the observer, there must be sunshine. Rain was something new to the post-flood world. Before the flood there was no rain, and therefore no clouds, *but a mist used to rise from the earth and water the whole surface of the ground (2:6)*. There was also a water fishbowl-like canopy over the earth preventing the formation of rain and the clouds from which the rain comes.

In the post-flood world, they would see two new phenomena, rain and clouds. So people would not panic and think God was flooding the earth again, from time to time the sun would be shining from behind them as the rain came from the cloud in front of them. Whenever their angle was between 40 and 42 degrees from the sun, *the bow will be seen in the cloud*. **So rain, clouds, and rainbows were new and the rainbow was God’s sign to them that He would keep His covenant.** When there is rain, sunshine and an observer at the right angle, the rainbow will always be there. So will God’s covenant.