

ADVENT WEEK ONE

December 3, 2019

Hope in a Rainbow

Genesis 9:1-17

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: I have set my rainbow in the clouds, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and the earth. Whenever I bring clouds over the earth and the rainbow appears in the clouds, 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." Genesis 9:12-15 (NIV)

Having grown up in the desert of El Paso, summer rainstorms brought special joys to otherwise hot, dry days. There's something amazing about the smell of rain in the desert. A unique scent fills the air with aromatics from the leaves of the creosote bush. Then there are the stunning rainbows that appear in the stark blue skies that seem to immediately follow the storms. I was fortunate to experience these simple sensory pleasures after every rain.

In the story of Noah, God is tormented by the condition of earth and the violence, corruption and evil of humans. God is willing to use the rain to create mighty floods to destroy all life—land, plants, animals and humans. It seems like a drastic approach, but with Noah's help, the stage is set for a hopeful new beginning. God even offers the rainbow following the flood as a sign of his promise to care for us and to never again destroy the earth in this manner.

Sadly, we don't have to look too far to see a repeating landscape of destruction, violence, selfishness, and evil all around us. The earth is being assaulted through our actions and inactions, and humankind is ignoring the cries of the sick, hungry, oppressed, voiceless, and hurting. Our world is once again flooded—flooded with need. So how do we know that the rainbow will come? We find hope in God's promises.

Divine One, stir up in the hearts and minds of humanity the desire to love one another, care for one another, protect our earth, and seek out ways to meet the endless needs of this hurting world. May the sweet smell of rain bring with it healing on earth and may rainbows continue to offer hope for the storms our world is weathering today.

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