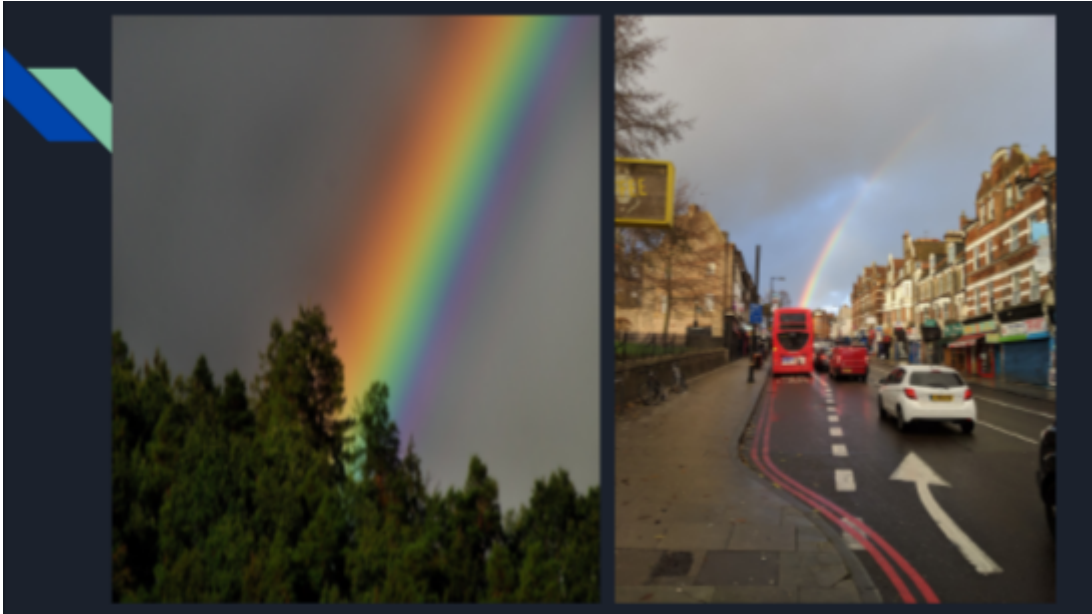


Rain! Don't we get enough of it in this country! Well, I know, but, actually, this is the right subject for me because, I wonder what your earliest memory is? My earliest memory is of the rain! Being all cosy in my pram as the rain teemed down on it's cover! Anyone that knows me knows I actually quite like the rain, especially a good thunderstorm! To me, at night, it makes the city lights sparkle and look beautiful.



Actually I think a lot of other people feel the same way. You can get videos on YouTube that are just hours of the sound of rain, even a distant thunderstorm to relax you, or bird song or the sounds of waves washing gently on a beach. This brings me to a major point to make in this article. It's one we don't often make, we're used to the arguments of design to prove the Creator God and I don't want to minimise them, but it seems to me the artists and poets often get closer to what it means to be human than the scientists do, even though science reveals God's workmanship in creation.

I could tell you about the amazing design of the raindrop, how it's the perfect size because of the surface tension of water. I could even tell you that rain probably only existed after the great flood. I could tell you how light refracts through the rain to split it into its different wavelengths to form a rainbow. But the greatness of a rainbow isn't really about that, it's about something far more fundamental and obvious to us as people, It's beautiful to look at!

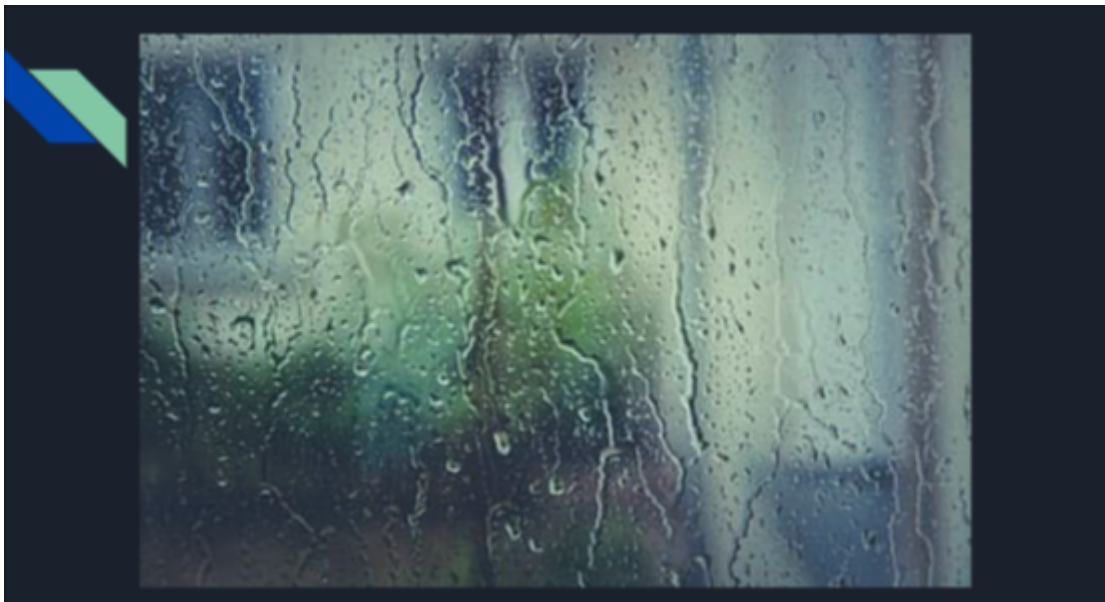


A person doesn't usually go into an art gallery and marvel at how the atoms in paint form structures on the canvas! Creation is exactly what it says, it's creative. So let's learn from man's ability to be creative! Let the artists and poets teach us something for a change. Why do humans appreciate these things, find them relaxing and pleasant? Why do we appreciate beauty, especially in the natural world? Why? Why do artists paint or poets write of the majesty of the natural world, about deep things they feel in their soul? Solomon needed David to play his harp to ease his troubled heart. Why do we find these things relaxing and pleasant? Why should that be so? Why do people feel the need to paint or express themselves in artforms? Why write a poem or symphony about the majesty of the rain? I once wrote a poem about the rain having been out in it. I don't suppose it was very good, but the question is why did I feel the need? The animals don't paint pictures and sit and contemplate nature and write poems.

However, you may well say, "I saw they can teach elephants to paint". Well, you can teach an animal some tricks to do, learned behaviour for food, but they don't create like we do from our imagination, pure creativity. A spider makes a web, a bird a nest, out of instinct not creativity. A beaver doesn't suddenly feel the need to make a pyramid or paint his dam blue just because he thought it would look good!




We're creative because we're made in God's image, the animals weren't. We have consciousness, language and creativity, they're some of the things that set us apart from the animals. We appreciate beauty as people because God is personal and He gave us our minds and affections. Obvious things, maybe to us, but the unbelieving world doesn't want to see them, the world wants to tell you you're just an animal. Why does it do that? Because, if it acknowledged a difference, then it would have to acknowledge God, who they don't want to acknowledge, because it would make them guilty. They imagine they'll be free without Him, but actually the opposite is true.



So think about this next time you're listening to the rain. Why is it relaxing? Because God is gracious. He could have made the natural world horrible in sound and sight, but it is beautiful, and the parts that aren't are a result of the fall when Mankind sinned and rebelled.

We know scientifically how these phenomena come about and it's amazing, the water cycle and how the rain cleans the earth and the air, but are we missing a deeper lesson? God made our minds and hearts to appreciate the natural world. However, having said that, we mustn't be tempted to worship the creation and ignore the Creator!




Romans 1.25 Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and **worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator**, who is blessed for ever. Amen.

26 For this cause God gave them up unto **vile affections**: ...

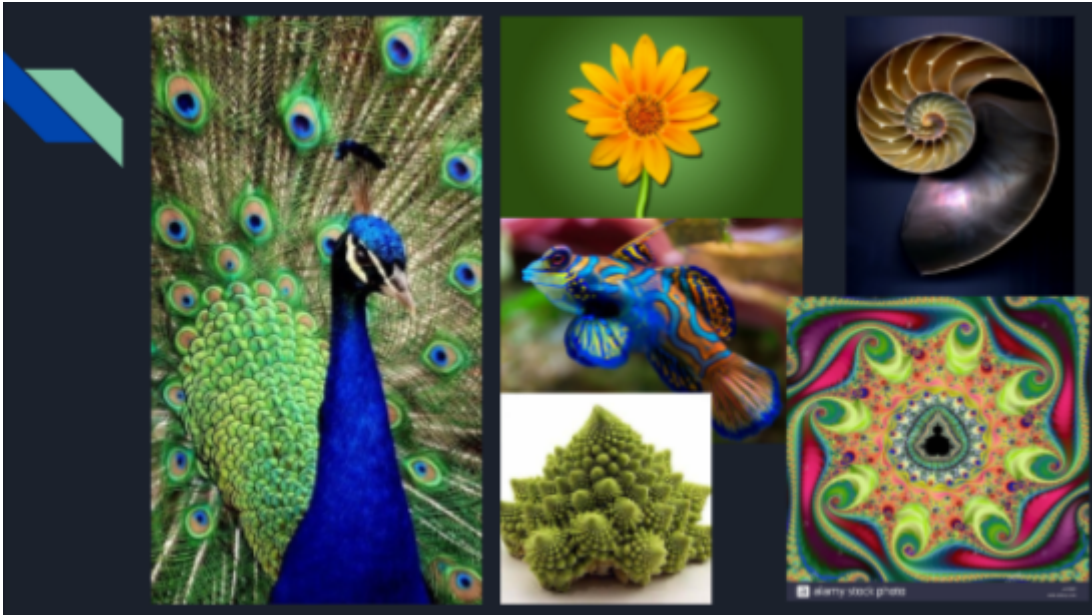
27 And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, **burned in their lust one toward another; men with men...**

Men have even hijacked the rainbow as a symbol for this wickedness. An abominable thing. God made the natural world and everything behind it, He upholds it all with what we call His works of providence which move the events of time and space, even the small things, like the wind moves the weather systems or how water currents move in the sea. Man still can't accurately predict the weather and fluid dynamics are one of the most complex things to understand, let alone the unimaginable complexity of God's providential acts working all events together. But He does work all things together, and He does it for the good of those that love Him.



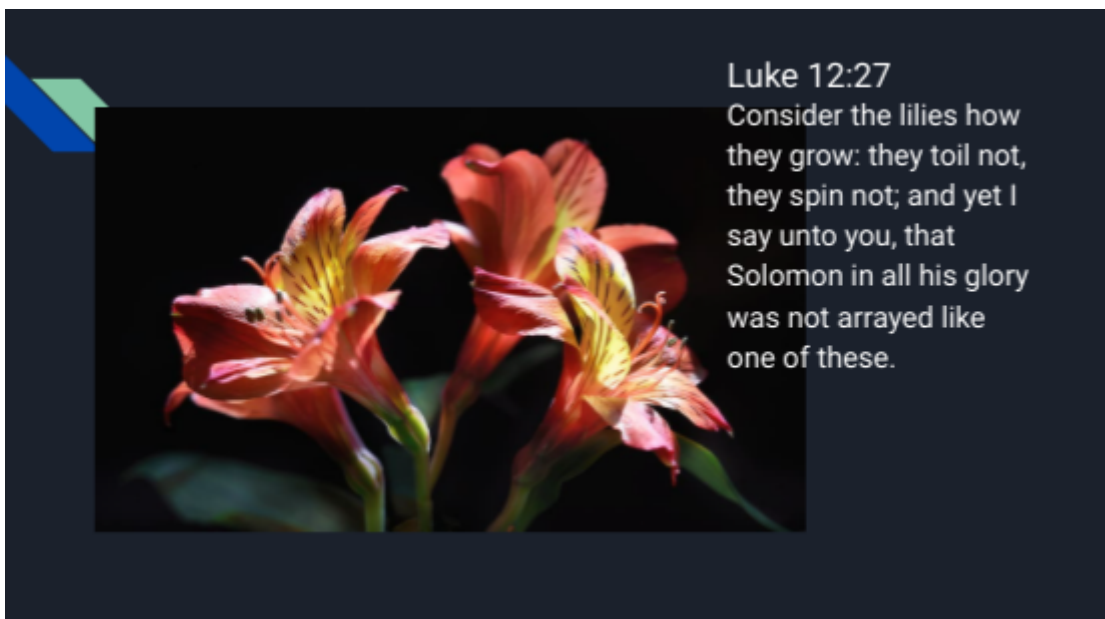
Hebrews 1.3
Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and **upholding all things by the word of his power**, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high:

Romans 8.28
And we know that **all things work together for good** to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose.



Charles Darwin said that the beauty of the peacock's tail made him feel sick because he knew he couldn't explain it with his theory of evolution. He called the beauty of flowers 'the abominable problem' still admitted by evolutionists as unsolved today. Why? Because as well as their scientific design God created flowers to show beauty.

Some say beauty is purely subjective, and of course it is in the eye of the beholder on a certain level, but the question still remains, why should we find things beautiful? And of course there are many universal things most people recognise as beautiful. The Bible reveals beauty is objective, for example Rachel, Abigail, Esther, Bathsheba, David and Absalom are described as beautiful. Solomon decked the temple with precious stones for beauty etc. If it's purely subjective, beauty, largely, loses its meaning.

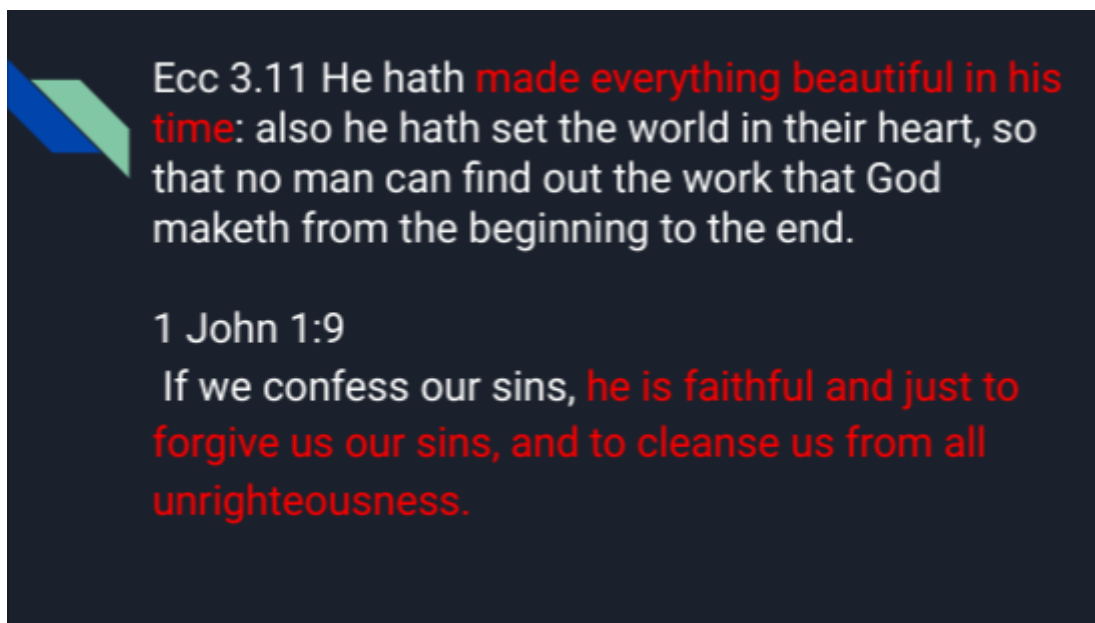


The rainbow is a beautiful part of the general revelation of God in nature that speaks of God's creativity and is explained in the further 'special' revelation of the Bible. He gave it as

a beautiful reminder, a promise to Noah to never bring a worldwide flood again. He's kept that promise for 4000 yrs. Because God doesn't break promises. He promises to save all that come to Him from their guilt because He sent a Saviour Jesus Christ the Lord. I'll give you just one of these promises in a verse at the end. I could have chosen so many.

Salvation is a free gift of grace just like the rain, vital for life. Mankind is spending millions to try to find water on other planets but takes for granted the rain. We're told there's ice on Mars but no rain. On Venus it rains acid! What if God withheld the rain like in the time of Elijah? Have you ever really known what it is to be truly thirsty? Without water, in three days you're dead! But salvation is the same. We need righteousness and God freely provides it in Christ as the perfect man. He can be our substitute. The question is, do you really want it? Do you hunger and thirst for righteousness as the Bible says?

I'll end with some more Bible verses:



1 John 1.9 is a promise he'll keep, just like the rainbow. When you see it, thank God for beauty. Remember His promises. When you lie in bed listening to the peaceful rain, think of the Grace of God coming down in Christ who is the Prince of peace.