

# Inside the Rainbow

by A.W. Tozer

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*A.W. Tozer's sermon 'Inside the Rainbow' emphasizes the sovereignty of God and the importance of worship in maintaining peace amidst earthly chaos.*

**Duration:** 33:55

**Scripture:** Revelation 2:2-3, Revelation 2:9, Revelation 3:20, Revelation 4:1-2, Revelation 4:4, Revelation 4:11

**Topics:** "Covenant"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the vision of John in the book of Revelation. John sees four beasts with six wings and many eyes, constantly praising God. The preacher emphasizes the importance of worship and the eternal nature of God. John also receives letters from Jesus, addressing the works, labors, and trials of the churches. The sermon highlights the challenges of describing God's appearance and the difficulty of conveying the depth of spiritual experiences through testimony. The preacher also mentions the events described in Revelation, such as the opening of seals, the coming of the great red dragon, and the last judgment. The sermon concludes by emphasizing the glory of the eternal Son and the ability to see beyond the physical realm.

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## Transcript

I thought the various names you've called out so joyously that belong to our Lord, that if they were taken by this congregation, who should be king of the world, I know who it would be. I know who you'd elect. I wrote along with you on that.

King of kings and Lord of lords. Now, as you know, I request a few sermons from the book of Revelation. I am skipping two letters to the seven churches.

I couldn't very well telescope them in, and they're really prophetic, so I'm jumping from the first chapter to the fourth. Some letters to the churches of Asia, somebody else to develop when he has more time. You read from the fourth chapter of Revelation, After this I looked, and behold, a door was opened in heaven, and the first voice which I heard was, as it were, of a trumpet talking with me, which said, And I will show thee things which must be hereafter.

And immediately I was in the Spirit, and behold, in heaven, and one sat on the throne. And he that sat was to look on like a jasper and a shard in stone. And there was a rainbow round about the throne in sight like unto an emerald.

And round about the throne there were four and twenty. And upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment, and crowns of gold. Out of the throne proceeded lightning, and thunderings, and voices.

There was a fire burning before the throne, which are the seven spirits of God. And before the throne there was a cinder crystal. And round about the throne were four beasts full of eyes before and behind.

And the first beast was like a lion. The second beast like a calf. The third beast had the face as a man.

And the fourth beast was like a flying eagle. And the four beasts had each of them six about him. And they were full of eyes within, day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God almighty, the present is and is to come.

And when those beasts give glory and honor and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who liveth forever, the four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth forever and ever, and cast their crowns before him, that thou wert worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power. For thou hast all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created. We have it here, between what was and what was to come, John seeing a door opened in heaven.

And he heard a voice, as it were, of a trumpet, and he saw one sitting on the throne. And he heard the sound of the ceasing, never-dying worship. Holy, holy, holy is the Lord.

John had just heard these three of these seven letters in the two chapters, two and three, of Revelation. He just had seen the works and the patience and the service and the poverty and the tribulation and the sword and the death, the stumbling blocks and the idolaters and the backsliders and the false prophets and the liars, the external riches along with internal poverty and the blindness and the nakedness and the danger to the crown and to the reward and the need to overcome. And the man of John's sensitivity took this, except by great suffering.

Then before his mind there appeared the four horsemen riding forth, and they saw the opening of the seals and the trumpet and saw the uncapping of the bottomless pit and the scourge of scorpions and the coming of the great red dragon and the mark of the beast and Armageddon and the last judgment. In the middle of this, he couldn't escape it. He was caught between what was and what would be, and there was in it, and with all those present woes and approaching calamities, stay sane.

And how can we stay sane and immerse ourselves in entertainment or liquor or dope or a high-keyed play from which we relax and collapse before we go out to work the next day? Unless we do that, then how can we stay optimistic and poised, and how can we keep sound minds? I hear insanity, that is, they don't use that word anymore, that's an old word, but it's mental illnesses. I hear a lot about it, but while I deplore it and I'm sorry for it, I don't wonder at it. I wonder that anybody can keep it right.

I think we only do it by putting our heads in the sand, that is humanity, only does it by not thinking about it. If you don't think about it, it'll go away. And so people just don't think, and in order that they might not think, they seem to keep them busy, like the twist, for instance.

And now John, thank God, in the middle of all this, John's heart was about as heavy as hearts can get and still not burst their seams. John beheld in heaven, verse 1, as much as to say, John, don't let them fool you, there's no all this down here. If you want to keep sane, look through that open door, and see a throne and one on the other.

If you do that, you can keep calm. Now, let's be sure of one thing, no matter who you send to Washington, whether it's John Kennedy, Dick Nixon, Barry Goldwater, or Jackie Kennedy, remember one law, failure. And it's not because they're Democrats or Republicans, but it's because they're people, they'll fail you.

For all this riding forth of the horsemen, and the opening of the bottomless pit, and the scorpions, and the dragon, and the mark of the beast, and the Armageddon, and the last judgment in general hell, there isn't any solution to all for it down here on this earth. And that is not to speak slightly about great men. We have great men, I have some great men in the world.

Maybe they're not always the one that the voters think they are, but there are some great men. But no matter where you put them, they can't help you. They do the best they can, but they're all dumb, only they're dumb in different ways.

All added together, they couldn't help us. The rulers can't help us, who take counsel together, and the diplomats, according to the rules of Emily Post, nor the agreements that are made to be broken, nor the laws, so-called international laws, that are broken whenever it suits some law of the lawmakers, nor the soldiers, nor the weapons, however developed, talks. Will Rogers used to say, you know, that he knew the cure for war.

It was to abolish peace conferences. No, science can't help you, and cultural influences can't help you. If somebody drops a bomb on you, you'll just be as they ain't, as if you talk with an Oxford accent, either way or vice versa.

It doesn't help you when you've been killed or stashed or burnt or shot down or hewed to pieces or kicked into a quick line. It doesn't help you, and you know my school. So let's remember that you'll never get any help except from that open door.

And John said, Behold, an open door was opened in heaven, and a set throne. There was a set throne. Now, what does that throne proclaim? Certainty and authority and sovereignty.

And certainty is something nobody has outside of Jesus Christ. You might as well, we might as well face up. I heard of a permanent wave one time, said guaranteed to last 30 days.

Now, if that's what permanent lasts 30 days, then I wonder what impermanent could possibly mean. And we don't build automobiles now. Build them to shine, and do it silently and smoothly.

And then you can get a new one a year after next. Buildings, they used to build buildings in England that would stand, and other parts of Europe that would stand and are still standing after a thousand years. And wouldn't be caught dead in the building over 40 years old now.

Anywhere. We, there's nothing permanent. Don't imagine you're permanent.

How healthy you are, bud, you're not permanent. I'm telling you. You may be as just as good-looking as Roger, but old mother nature and father time are doing a little jig on your countenance.

And one of these days, the hook marks are going to show, and you're going to be like the rest of us. I get around places like this, and I meet people I had lunch today, noon, with a Presbyterian preacher I had years. And I apologized for the way I looked.

And he said, well, look at me. And I did. We aren't permanent.

Nobody's permanent. But when we look at the throne, there's a place of permanence and certainty and sovereignty and universal dominion. You know, somebody asked Cal Coolidge how he liked it.

He came around the house and he said, how do you like living in the White House, Cal? He said, the trouble with it is you can't get permanent occupancy. So that is the problem. Always, everywhere, you can't get permanent occupancy.

And he added, and furthermore, there's no chance for it. And there's no place to go, you know, no place to hide. But if we see that throne, now here's that blissful center.

You've sung all most of your life about that blissful center, fixed on that blissful center of rest. Sometimes when you're not under her, I like to take a hymn apart and ask the congregation what the various phrases mean. Nobody knows the rule.

You know, we just sing because we like the music. We don't know what we're singing. Like we sing, I dare not trust the sweetest frame.

I asked a whole congregation what the sweetest frame was. No one, one of them knew. And yet they've been singing about it since they were little.

And then we wish upon that blissful center of rest. What is the blissful center? I don't suppose very many would know. They hadn't thought about it.

They don't need her. But the blissful center is nobody else than God, the center of the universe, the throne of God around which he bends. Now, here I say a sanity.

And you can keep out of the booby hatch if you'll keep on the throne. And remember that there's one throne that doesn't change. We just went through a period of rattling all over the world.

There were the tumblings of thrones. And you could hear the rending of cloth. It was the terrible.

And you could hear something rolling like a hoop down the sidewalk in every town in Europe. And it was crowned from unkinging the walls. There weren't any kings around there.

Mark Twain said there was a time in Europe when there were so many little countries that the king, when he lay down at night, couldn't stretch out a passport. And we had kings and rulers of everywhere. You don't have them anymore.

We got two or three of them left over there. But mostly we don't have kings. But if you want to keep saying with certainty and assurance, well, you'll remember, look at the throne.

Then one sat on the throne. Now, he's not identified. He sent the word one.

He's not identified. But there in the center of all the world, he doesn't need to be identified. The Bible is a beautifully written book, probably the most beautiful piece of literature in the entire world.

But you know that even the Bible sometimes laughs at school marms and grammarians. And the text of the grammatical construction goes all awry. For instance, here is where this man, Paul, says, I know whom I have believed and am sure that he can keep that which I have committed unto against that day.

You ever think that those three, that's one of the most messed up sentences I ever saw over New York. But it stands pretty well down the centuries anyhow. I know whom I have believed, but he didn't say who the whom.

But then if you knew Paul, you didn't have to have him identify the whom. Because everybody knew who his whom was. Everybody knew who it was that Paul loved beyond all the blood in his veins and the nerves in his body and the bow.

He knew who it was that he loved. They knew who it was that he loved more than he loved life or property or money, anything. It was none other than the one you've named this afternoon, the lily of the valley and the rose of Sharon and the son Jacob.

So he didn't have to. He was an old man now and he still had his head. But shortly after he wrote those beautiful words, the only time in his life that he lost his head.

And he lost it for a little while. They rolled it down over the flagstones of that prison. But his soul's word had long wanted to be with the one that he didn't name, but that everybody knew.

Well, then he said, I know whom I have believed and that he is able to keep that. Now that, it stands for something else, but there's no antecedent there. What is it, Paul? What are you talking about? What have you turned over for that? He didn't say.

But everybody knew that Paul had turned over life and death and heaven. Turned over his soul and his past and his present and his future and his body and his spirit and his mind. Paul had been turned over to Jesus Christ and God could pass his hand around the whole man, Paul, and touch nothing.

It was all on the altar. He didn't have to spend half a page telling people what it was that he turned over to the Lord. Everybody that knew Paul knew.

So there are some people, you don't have to ask where they are Wednesday nights, and you don't have to ask what they're doing at a given time. They're still both. There'll be a prayer meeting Wednesday night, of course.

There are some fellows, they're deacons in churches, but if they ask where they'll be Wednesday night, say so. But there are other people, you know where they are, they'll be at the prayer meeting. And there are some things that don't have to be explained, particularly when a man with a bald head and a gray beard and a faraway look in his eyes says something.

You don't have to say, now explain it, shut up, keep my down. The old holy man is talking, let him talk. He says God's keeping the light and I don't ask him what that is, he knows.

Against that day. What day are you talking about, Paul? When you retire? You're looking forward to superannuation? You know, one, what was his name? Dr. Godby said he got sanctified so he wouldn't have to get superannuated. And what was Paul looking forward to? Oh, that day.

That day when righteousness should triumph. That day when all evil out of the world. That day when the fires of judgment should burn that which is sinful.

That his good should rise like Atlantis out of the sea of time. And Jesus Christ should be King of kings and Lord of him from the river to the ends of the earth. And every man should sit under his own vine and fig

tree and no man trade.

There, that's the day. And Paul knew, Paul had been talking about that for a long time, all over the world, everywhere they'd listen to him. That wonderful man that was coming in the hour of his triumph.

So he wrote a little testimony. You see, he broke up the English, but he got his idea across. And that's what I like.

Well, here we have it again now. That was what the preachers call a digression there. But we'll get back to John now.

It says here, one sat on the throne and he isn't identified, but he's in the center of all worlds. And you don't ask Melchizedek who it was. Melchizedek, the King of Salem, and he'd say, most high God, possessor of heaven, ask Abraham.

And he'd say, El Shaddai, the almighty God, Jehovah-Jireh, the Lord that provideth. Moses. And he would say, that is the I am that I am.

And that is his memorial for all generations. Ask Isaiah, he's the high and lofty one that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is holy. And ask Paul.

And he would say, he is there of our Lord Jesus Christ, the God of peace that brought again from the dead, our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the everlasting. And ask the fathers. And they would say that he is God, the father almighty maker of heaven and earth and all things visible and invisible.

They knew, you and I ought to know, there was one sat on the throne. Now I ask you to note that one that sat on the throne. He looked upon, he said.

And then he raced off into figures of speech in an effort to explain what he looked like. One problem was God's and the other was John's. God's problem was to disclose himself to John.

For which is uncreated disclosed itself to that which is created. How can the infinite disclose itself to the finite? God had that. And then having done it, John had a job.

And his problem was how he could describe what God had disclosed. So that's usually the trouble in almost any testimony. I never heard a testimony yet that I did justice to what I've tried to give testimonies in my time, a little here and there.

And I've never yet been able to do it justice. You get a feeling that you have just tasted of the milk and honey out of the Holy land and walked with God in the cool of the day. I'm going to write that.

I'm going to get that down. But anytime you get it down, it's lost all its juice and there isn't anything left. Words, words won't do it.

Don't you think ever for a split second that you can get your teeth and tongue and lips and by a little conference, get them working together and express what God is. You can't. They can do mutter and mumble and hope for the best.

So always remember that when you're testifying, if you sit down and you have, but you've done your best and that's all God or angels can want you to do. Do the best you can. You never can tell it the way, but do the best you can.

That's all. When Charles Wesley wrote, Jesus lover of my soul or love divine, all love is excelling. He didn't, it was in his heart.

And when he wrote that, that, uh, how is it all love divine? How sweet thou art. When shall I find my willing up with thee? I thirst, I faint, I die to prove the greatness of redeeming love, the love of Christ to me. That sounded and said, but when Charles wrote it, he shoved it aside and said, nothing, just nothing.

Because if I could tell it the way he's done it. So we have this, always these two problems. One is to understand God and the other is to tell people what we've understood.

Do both so imperfectly. There are the two substances, you know, that which is God spiritual, unique, uncreated, unapproachable, holy, other super sensible, dwelling in light that no man can approach unto. And then there's that which is not God created that you and me around about us, Pittsburgh hills and rivers and all the rest.

I bet God likes to shine forth and tell us what he can. And here he is now on the throne and there's a rainbow around about the throne. I heard, I heard a one time, I never looked this up to check it, but it's just one of those delightful little things you like to remember.

He said only goes halfway around, you know, it starts over here, makes a half circle, stops over here. But here was a rainbow that went around the throne as if God were saying to the whole universe, my rainbow of peace, my promise of protection, my covenant circles, a whole throne of God. Noah's rainbow went halfway around and John's rainbow went all the way.

And then here in the middle of it all were 24 elders. I want to whisper something to you. And again, I'll break down and you can't say what you feel, but there was a time when I worried a little bit about dying, even when I knew I was converted and had the eternal life of people, couldn't lose it, you know, and all.

We're very nice, but you know something? Sometimes I used to be a little afraid to get in. I wasn't scared, but I didn't like it. If I wasn't as comfortable, I used to be behind the horse and buggy or behind the horse and the buggy.

But caught myself a few times lately thinking maybe today she'll curse. And I was thrilled as a boy before Christmas. Then I think of the others.

I'll save them all and don't let this happen to these poor people, most of whom aren't converted. But it's for myself. I'd like to be before elders are and the beast and all the rest.

And I don't want anybody running after me with a Greek lexicon, trying to tell me that doesn't mean beast. You can't understand what it means anyhow. Not all the linguists in the world can help you in.

You've got 24 elders there. Some are out looking as if he had just stepped out of a tomb after 14 centuries entombment with his Greek New Testament and start to read what 24 elders mean. I don't know what they mean, but I know they're there and they're inside that glorious, gorgeous circle by the emerald rainbow.

And that's where I want to be by the grace of God. I'll find myself there, you know, everybody else. You get up there first, you won't know a beast from an elder and or you won't know an angel from a seraphim, but you'll find yourself after a while.

And the one in the midst, you'll know him because in Jesus Christ, you do know him. And then there's the lightning. Oh, I desire the, uh, are the, the, uh, rulers of Israel and the rulers of the church, I suppose.

But if it isn't that, don't look at me. I didn't say I suppose it was, but the lightnings and thunders and voices and the seven fires. Now, what about them? Well, God's throne is here unchanged and a cup of iniquity on earth is filled up and the purposes of God are moving on and his plans are being fulfilled.

And now it becomes a throne of judgment. That is an awful time, an awful time. A throne of grace becomes a throne of judgment.

Then the thunders begin and the, there begins after the fifth chapter bracket, the sixth chapter opens up and then begins the fury of God upon a world that's cursed. And there were the creatures round about the throne. They show forth the glory of the eternal son.

They had eyes, they had eyes inside and outside, and they had eyes before and behind them. They could see, they saw not only in earth, they saw in heaven. They saw not only, but they saw through.

And then there was one of them had a face like a lion or they all had, there was the king of beasts, they tell me. Oh, I know what they say. They say that a lion gets scared and runs sometimes, but I still like to think of a lion as the king of beasts.

There isn't any more beautiful sight in this, and I suppose in the world than a full grown tawny lion with a mop of a tail that he shakes, standing straight up and stretching his neck out of that great bearded neck of his and straight over that as he hits, you know, and everything in the whole zoo trembles when that great fellow roars. He's a lion and he isn't afraid of anything. He's the king of the jungle, and here we have him in the very glory of God, kingship of Jesus Christ our Lord.

But what's this calf doing here, poor little old calf? What's he doing here? He had the face of that cat, that ox was obedient unto death, you know. You know, the Baptists have a saying for their missionary, whatever it is, outlet. It shows an ox and then it shows an alder and a plow, and it says, Ready for either or for both.

And that's what he's saying here. This calf, Jesus Christ our Lord, did die and gave himself as an ox to die for the sins of men. And then there's the man and the flying eagle, the deity of Jesus, and so their worship increases.

I noticed here that even the elders and beasts get blessed more sometimes than they do with others. There was a little lion, and then the beasts give glory and honor and thanks to him that sat on the throne who liveth forever and ever, and that sparked off the elders and suddenly they fall down before him that sat on the throne and worship him that liveth forever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne. They are working together up there, the beasts and the elders, the uncreated beasts, I mean the unredeemed beasts, the unfallen ones, and the elders who had been redeemed.

Now comes the inscription of praise to the Father, and with that I am through. The inscription of the Father, this is so beautiful, says, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor, for thou hast created

all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created. I believe that this is the I pity people.

I don't like to snarl at men who believe that we crawled up out of the colloidal ooze, and that our ancestors once lived in caves and had long tails, which they say with straight face that they wore off by sitting on them, and that's why we don't have them now, because we are the descendants of those fellows who sat around some tails. Well, bless them. I at least thank them for that.

I'd be embarrassed if they hadn't. I warn them. But I pity the people who believe that's where we came from.

I believe we came down from above by a tragemorous fall, not that we crawled up from below by a long and praiseworthy parade out of the mud, that when it's all over we'll be back where we started, only infinitely above where we started. We'll be as much above where we was above Adam or as heaven is above the Garden of Eden. I'm not looking to go back to the Garden of Eden.

I have no wish to go back to the Garden of Eden. I don't want to crawl back into the loins of Adam and be an unfallen man. I'll settle for a fallen by the blood of the Lamb, and made like unto Jesus by the miracle and wonder of his sanctifying grace.

Now, do you think it all happens at once? And I answer, no, it doesn't all happen at once any more than a full-grown man when the baby's born. You just get the beginnings when the baby's born. And if he's healthy and keeps on behaving himself until he's 30, he's a mature, full-grown man.

So when the Holy Ghost fills you in sanctifying grace, he doesn't finish the day's tools down and mark finished. No, no. If he did, we'd be what Browning called finished and finite clods.

But he brings us out and we grow and continue to mature and become like him. So I believe that we are created in order that we might worship God. I'm going to write a book one of these days, I think I'll borrow from the Presbyterians and call it The Chief End of Man, and it'll be on worship.

And my thesis will be that every intellectual has a reason for everything, has to have, and that there's nothing without a reason, though we don't know what a reason is. And that when God made man, he wasn't just doodling, he made man with a purpose, you know, is that we might glorify God and enjoy him forever. I believe that.

That's why I'm here. That's why I'm here, that I might glorify God. I believe that worship is the chief end of man, that it's the purpose of man that made him to be born and caused him to be born, that he might worship.

Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor, for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created. This is what John saw. I can read the headlines tonight with a whole lot more calm than if I didn't know.

And I can face up to the summit conferences, and they always fail, never been one succeeded yet. It's up to all that's out there, calmly, because I see a throne and one on a throne and a rainbow round the throne. Inside the holy, eternal, charmed and protected circle there are representatives of all the redeemed of all colors and tribes and tongues round the world.

And I see sitting on that throne one who is not named, who is described, and before whom all the intelligent and moral creation falls down and says, But thou, O God, brethren, I have suffered a lot in my day, and I suffer a little yet. Thank God for the privilege. And I wouldn't want to be anybody else than what I am, and I wouldn't want to go back into nonexistence and cease to be.

I don't want to crawl back out of something into nothing. I thank God I am something, that made in the image of God fallen and redeemed to be restored to the image of God again, so that with beasts and elders I may fall and cast my little crown at his feet. Now, that's what we live for, brethren.

That's what we live for. Lecture 6 Divine Justice and Sanctity 4 And he said, on one of the editorials, I think, he said that he had no doubt that we inclined, we evangelicals inclined, to swat mosquitoes all the time. But he said, instead of mosquitoes he said, You leave the lions and the leopards untouched.

He was a liberal. And I'm very nice about it, but I said to him, Dear brother, I noticed that your liberal friends claim that we evangelicals swat mosquitoes and leave them untouched. I said, I had always noticed that the liberals thought they were great leopard hunters, but I hadn't noticed it on their church doors.

But I said, on the other hand, I think the evangelical church back to Pentecost has a good record for leopard tails. We've mowed them down all around the leopard ears and thrown them down at the feet of Jesus. I'm still an evangelical.

I'm still an old-fashioned believer. I don't look through an open door and see a throne and one on a throne and believe what I see.

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