

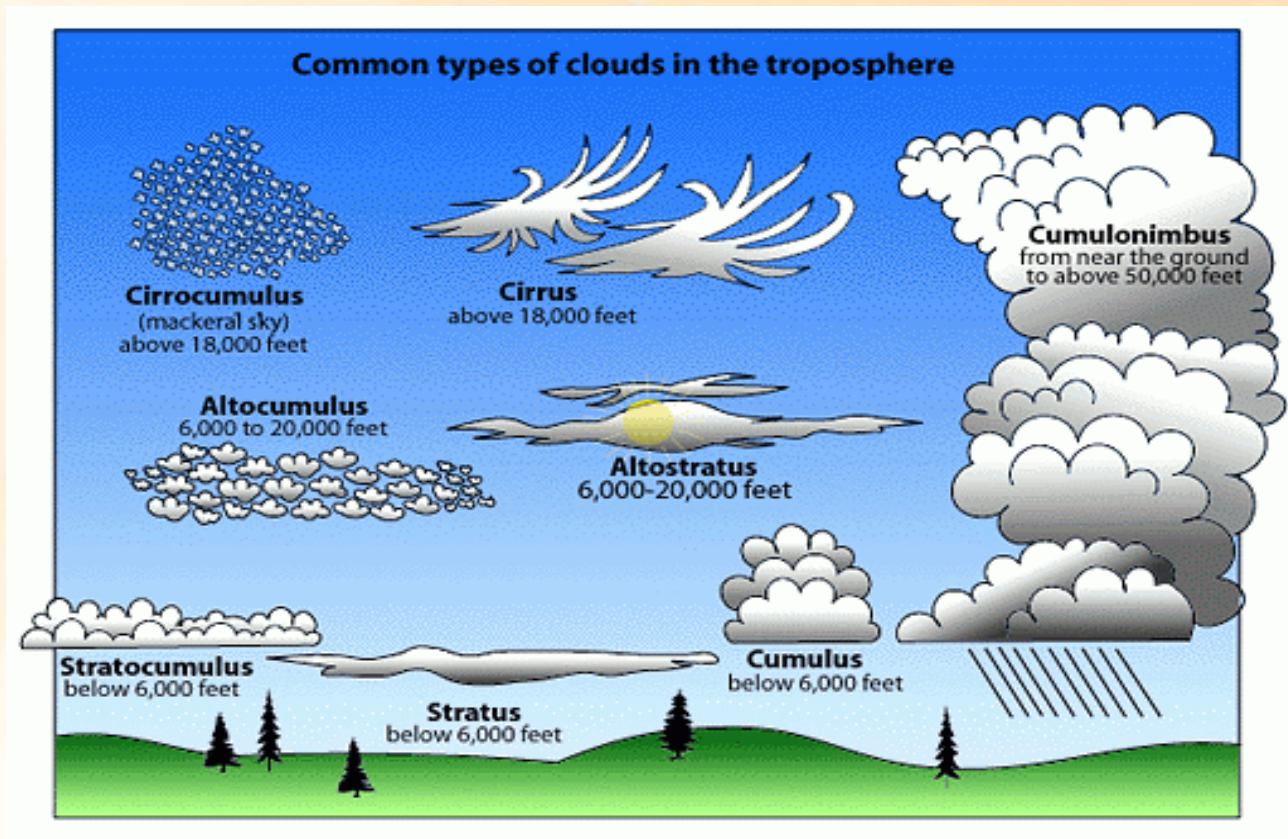
Title: Cloud

Scripture Reading: Exodus 13:21-22, Psalms 104:3

'By day the Lord went ahead of them in a pillar of cloud to guide them on their way and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light.

He took not away the pillar of the cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, from before the people.'

'He maketh the clouds his chariots.'



A cloud is a visible mass of tiny water droplets or ice crystals suspended in the atmosphere. It forms when warm, moist air rises, cools, and condenses around dust particles in the sky. In everyday use, for example, the clouds covered the suns before the storm began. I think Philippines understand this definition better than any countries in the world. Because you have storms at least 26 times a year. And lately our sky has been covered with dark cloud frequently.

The Bible mentions clouds many times – both literally (as part of nature; we see cloud everyday. We brought our granddaughter Elise to the fishing port and we were looking at the sky. Then she said, 'There is no star.' I replied, 'there is star, it is just hidden behind the clouds) and symbolically (as signs of God's presence, guidance, and glory).

I remembered that I was supposed to pick up a colleague at Iloilo Airport. That was when I was still part of my previous organization. As I was driving to the airport towards Cabatuan, I saw approaching, very dark, thick clouds. The word that came to mind at the time was, 'fearful clouds.' It was ominous. True enough, it was the Spirit of God warning me of a great coming storm that will impact my life. And impact it did. The airplane could not land at that time. It had to be

turned back to Bacolod City or Cebu City; I really cannot remember, which city it turned back to. It was also another symbol that God was telling me: that whatever foreboding clouds that will come into my life, will be turned away. And it was proven true. We suffered greatly but did not expire because of the storms of life that came upon Pastor Lily and I and this church in 2012. That foreboding clouds was turned away, like the plane was turned away. God was in my cloud, protecting and guiding me.



Clouds, that misty covering that often falls upon God's people, is not a blot in God's handwriting. With Jesus, clouds come as a part of His train of glory. Clouds are not really our enemies; they do not hide His (God's) face. Once you understand that clouds are instruments of divine love, they should no longer be feared.

You will never understand your woes, trials, challengers and sufferings until you understand the meaning of holy clouds. It is true, Christ will return at the end of this age in clouds of glory. **But He is also coming to us with clouds throughout our journey here on earth.**

When you invite Christ to come into your life to meet your needs, He comes with clouds. The clouds are chariots of His divine blessings. **Psalms 104: 3 says,** 'He maketh the clouds his chariots (instruments, weapons).'



The cloud that may be hanging over your head at this very moment is not some cold, foreboding mist of wrath. We are so afraid of clouds. We almost always attribute them to storms. But in

reality, they are pillows of peace and comfort. When our Lord Jesus comes with clouds, He comes to lead, to reveal Himself and to provide a protective covering for His people. Let me prove to you from His scriptures. That clouds, no matter how dark or fearful they may appear to the human eye, are habitation of the Christ of glory. When you know that He is in your cloud (woes, sorrow, suffering, challenges), you can rest in quiet confidence, knowing He is at work.

1. The cloud in your life is a sign of God's faithfulness

Exodus 13:21-22 says, 'By day the Lord went ahead of them in a pillar of cloud to guide them on their way and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light.'

He took not away the pillar of the cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, from before the people.'

Genesis 9:14 says, 'the rainbow shall be seen in the cloud.'

In February 4, 2023, we gathered a great number of us, to have our prayer and praise at Igtuble. On that day, we saw double rainbows.



Is it a coincidence? No. We forgot, but God remembered and sent the double rainbows. God set a rainbow in the cloud as an everlasting sign of His faithfulness. The rainbow has existed for 5000 years since Noah's time. The rainbow is a sign of God's everlasting faithfulness to His sons and daughters. Let us hear from God himself concerning this rainbow. **Genesis 9:16 says,** 'And the bow shall be in the cloud (the cloud of your life); and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth.' 5000 years ago, God already planned and revealed it through the rainbow as a representation or foreshadowing of Jesus Christ. The seven colors of the rainbow (red, orange, yellow, green, blue,

indigo, violet) are not just natural phenomena; they are symbolic reflection of Jesus who reveals himself as light and grace to humanity. I will touch more on this later.



The rainbow always come to us as a bow (dome). The bow carries deep covenantal and symbolic significance. The bow (dome) represents a covenantal covering. But you must be under that bow. So, every time, when you go to any location and a rainbow appears before you, it is God telling you that He remembers the deep covenantal promises to you. God is enough. God can be trusted. 5000 years has passed. The rainbow is still there. It represents the everlasting faithfulness of God. I do not care what people say. What God says is enough. So, when we intentionally went up to the mountains of Igtuble, much nearer to God than while in the valley of Iloilo, God knew and revealed himself to this church, through the

rainbow of His deep covenantal promises to us as a church. The rainbow is God's visible promise of mercy after judgment. We were judged in 2012. But there was tremendous mercy in that judgment. And in 2023, 10 years later, at Igtuble, God says, I still remember you. The rainbow represents grace (mercy) after wrath, hope after destruction. Every time the rainbow appears, God remembers His covenant – not that He forgets, but it reminds you of His enduring mercy. I do not know what sins you have committed, how far you have gone from God, your faithlessness, your despair, your woes, your challenges, God remembers his covenant with you.

Do you understand the meaning of what God has actually promised those who trusted Him? He is saying, 'When I see the cloud covering you, it will remind Me that I have promised to keep you from destruction. Your trials will not destroy you! Fear not; no matter how dark it may seem, your King sits Lord of the flood. You do not have to remind me to be faithful, your cloud (woe, trials, sorrow, disillusionment) causes Me to remember.'

Practically every day, we hear of war clouds (Ukraine War, Hamas-Israel War, Thailand and Cambodia skirmishes and even China and the Philippines conflict could not be ignored) storm clouds (Typhoon Nando), then personally clouds of

depression (nobody knows except ourselves), clouds of fear, and clouds of gloom. But these descriptions of fearful clouds are only from a carnal eye (5 senses) view. We only see with our 5 senses. Actually, clouds are 'divine markers.' If you have a cloud hanging over you right now, you have been set apart for divine action. God is getting ready to reveal Himself to you in a supernatural manner. What we think are clouds of woe are, in reality, clouds of deliverance. We forget that God is at work bringing about a glorious miracle?

King David was in a cloud when he was in the cave of Abdullah. David sang this song the day God delivered him from the enemy: He sang, 'At the brightness that was before him his thick clouds passed, hail stones and coals of fire. The Lord thundered in the heavens, and the Highest gave his voice, he shot out lightning and discomfited them. He delivered me from my strong enemy.' I remembered when Typhoon Yolanda (cloud) came, I remembered God opened up showers of blessings from friends in Singapore, Hong Kong, churches in Singapore, that we became a magnet of blessings to so many people. The cloud of typhoon woe, were actually clouds of deliverance: financial deliverance, friendship with so many people that we do not know.

David didn't know until it was all over what the storm was all about. No doubt David sat trembling in a cave, while the lightning bolts struck – the hail stones came hurtling earthward – and the deafening thunder shook the ground. 'What does it all mean?' David must have asked himself. 'Here I am fighting a terrible enemy. Now I must sit here hopeless under these fearful, scary clouds.' But when the storm had passed and the cloud lifted, David looked about and not one enemy was in sight. God had sent the clouds, thunder, lightning, and all – to deliver him. So the cloud in your life is a sign of God's faithfulness.

2. Your cloud is a sign God has answered your prayer for guidance

Exodus 13:21 'And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them in the way..."

Numbers 9:17 'When the cloud lifted, the Israelites set out.'

The cloud in the bible is one of the most beautiful pictures of God's guidance. When God delivered the Israelites from Egypt, He did not leave them to wander on their own. Likewise, when God delivered

us from a life of sins, a life without God, a life of pain and sorrow, He did not leave us to wander on our own. He gave them a visible sign of His presence and direction – a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night.



CLOUD IN WILDERNESS



PILLAR OF FIRE

Likewise, today God showed us when and where to go. We do not have to guess the route. God himself lead us visibly. The Israelites did not decide their own schedule. They followed the movement of the cloud. The cloud's movement signified God's timing. If the cloud stayed – they waited. If the cloud moved – they followed. They learned obedience and patience through watching the cloud. The cloud was not just a GPS. It was the manifest presence of God Himself with His people. Today though we do not have a literal cloud today, the same God still guides His people – now through His Word, the Holy Spirit, and peace in our hearts. Today we follow God's presence in our hearts – through prayer, scripture, and peace. I remember a sister in this church came to Pastor Lily and said, 'God spoke to me to go to Manila and work.' We don't sense the guidance of the cloud. We sensed she wanted to move ahead of the cloud. Of course, what can we can if you say, 'God spoke to you.' Months later, we found out she lost her job and was not happy in Manila. Life had become a wilderness.' Do not use the name of God to get your way. Jan did not get her promotion as she wanted to. Now she wants to quit and find another job. Did the cloud move? Pastor Lily always says to her, 'Did God tell you to move?' she cannot give a definite answer but because of the existing problem, she just wants to move. Many Christians

today move ahead of the cloud, or did not move when the cloud moved. It is very simple. When a decision has to be made, 'what did God say? Does it affect you in terms of holiness, integrity, biblical standard? Did you pray about it? Do you have the peace when you made that decision to move?

Today, God still leads us through His presence in our hearts. The Holy Spirit nudges us through conviction, peace, or restlessness. God's word lights the way when we are uncertain. **Psalm 119:105 says**, 'Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path.' Prayer becomes the place where His direction becomes clear. So today when you feel uncertain about a decision – pause and pray until you sense peace. When you are unsure where to go next – let scripture speak before emotion leads.

Maybe you are waiting for a job, a relationship or a breakthrough – but the cloud has not moved yet. Do not rush ahead. When the cloud moves, doors will open naturally. God's timing is never late; it is always right. When you feel dark – when you do not know what tomorrow holds, God becomes your light. Sometimes His guidance comes as

a. A comforting word from scripture

b. A Sermon that speaks to your exact situation

c. A sense of calm when you pray.

I remembered, in the early years, Pastor Lily struggled tremendously to stay in the Philippines. For the first 10 years, she would ask me, 'dear when are we going home? I want to go home.' I could not answer her. But every time, when we came back from furlough, when we touched down Iloilo Airport, she would always say, 'a sense of peace overwhelmed my soul.' She may not like it, but God gave her the peace and say, 'I want you to stay here.' Of course, I would concoct an idea and say, we will go home, when we reached 100 churches. Then, after the 100 churches, she forgot and began to enjoy her ministry. The cloud stayed and we stayed. And we stayed for 40 years. But after 40 years, God's word, and circumstances clearly told us that the cloud is moving. Good things began to take place in Singapore preparing for our arrival. That is obedience. We have a comforting word from the bible. We have a sense of calm when we pray.

I practically finished preparing this sermon last Wednesday. Then Pastor Lily barged into my office in the afternoon that Wednesday. She was filled with joy, almost to a point of jumping, telling me

that God has shown her the meaning of her dream. You see, for a number times, she had repeated dreams of swimming in a beautiful, clear and calm sea and in a beautiful white sand beach. She couldn't understand the dream. Then God told her the interpretation that Wednesday afternoon. This is regarding our moving back to Singapore in 2026. This is the overall prophetic message. The recurring dream is a divine assurance which prophesied: "You are safe now. The turmoil is over. I am restoring your peace, purity, and freedom. You will live from My Spirit, not fear. You will move gracefully in My presence and reflect My beauty. It marked a transition in your spiritual life — from survival to rest, from striving to abiding, from trauma to transformation.' The Lord is saying to her. You are healed enough to swim again. You are learning to enjoy My presence without fear. The waters are no longer for rescue, but for renewal.'

I know that when we are having a cloud of horrible wilderness, of trials, woes, gloom and despair in our lives, challenges and even our mind, friends, enemies and even relatives and pagan around us will say, 'If your God is so powerful, why you do not have sunshine all the time, why are you suffering, why are you having all these problem? What kind of God are you serving?'

Well, God has good reason to stall our cloud. God proved his children, to see if they would run ahead of Him, forgetting to wait for His leading. He waits until we come to our senses, to the end of our patience and are willing to cry out, 'Lord, I will wait in this wilderness for ever, if that is Your will. I will do it your way. I will not move until you give me the word.'

Many a times, the cloud of our lives stall so that God can do battle with Satan on our behalf. That stalled cloud was performing a mighty work of God. It was saving their lives; it was confusing the enemy. And God was saying, 'Not one-inch further Satan. I will lead and protect my people, Get away, Leave. You are powerless.'

Psalms 68: 34 says, 'Ascribe ye strength unto God. His strength is in the clouds.' So, life up your eye and say with your mouth, 'Jesus your strength is my cloud right now.' The cloud is not meant to weaken and discourage those who lives under its shadow. Rather it is meant as a sure sign that the God of strength is on the scene to help.

3. The multi-colored grace of God in the cloud

Genesis 9:14 says, 'the rainbow shall be seen in the cloud.'

The rainbow's sevenfold light symbolizes the fullness of God's covenant grace. There is such a thing as grace. Pastor Lily shared on grace last Sunday. And I am surprised that I am to continue that truth in this sermon. Just as the rainbow appears after the storm, Christ appeared after sin and judgment to bring peace and promise.

When you see the rainbow, you can remember:

Red	-	His Sacrifice
Orange	-	His Spirit's fire
Yellow	-	His Glory and Joy
Green	-	His life and renewal
Blue	-	His truth and faithfulness
Indigo	-	His wisdom and depth
Violet	-	His royalty and reign

Together they display the multicolored grace of God which literally means 'many colored grace.'

Let's quickly go through the multi colored grace of God.

Red is the color of redemption. **'1 John 1:7 says,** 'The blood of Jesus, His Son, purifies us from all sin.' The covenant or the rainbow begins with the cross where His blood was shed to wash away our sins.

Orange is the fire of the Holy Spirit. **Matthew 3:11 says,** 'He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.' It is so important to be filled with the Holy Spirit. Because it brings about spiritual passion, endurance for God, and the refining fire of God. Just as fire purifies gold, the Holy Spirit purifies our hearts and ignites holy zeal. I can testify to that concerning my own life. There was such zeal and I was called a fanatic when I got born again and baptized with the Holy Spirit.

Yellow is the glory of God. **Rev 21:23 says,** 'The city does not need the sun or the moon for the glory of God gives it light. Yellow represents divine glory and thus bringing about joy and faith. In Christ, we behold the brightness of God's glory – a joy that no darkness can dim. When life feels dim,

fix your eyes on Jesus, the radiant light who brings hope.

Blue is the truth of heaven. Look at the sky. It is blue in color. There is such a thing as heaven. There is a place called heaven. There is a heaven awaiting us. There is a mansion prepared for us. Our suffering is a light affliction for the glory that is awaiting us. And Jesus said, 'I am the way, the truth and the life.' Christ is the way to heaven.

Indigo is the depth of wisdom. Indigo represents deep spiritual understanding and reverence. We are the only people on earth that have deep spiritual understanding and therefore we reverence God. Because we fear God, he endows us with deep understanding concerning the world, people, the future and even concerning God. Because of God, we can swim into deeper waters beyond surface faith into communion of the real world.

Violet is the royalty of Christ. The one who wore a crown of thorns now wears a crown of glory. **So now the seven colors together reveal the complete spectrum of God's grace:**

Red	-	His love saves
Orange	-	His Spirit empowers
Yellow	-	His Glory shines
Green	-	His life renews
Blue	-	His truth steadies
Indigo	-	His wisdom deepens
Violet	-	His kingship reigns

Just as the rainbow appears after the storm, so Christ shines after the cross – our eternal sign of peace and promise.

2000 years ago, Jesus was also in the cloud. He was in the cloud of transfiguration. **Matthew 17:5** says, 'A bright cloud overshadowed them, and a voice from the cloud said, 'This is My beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him.' That cloud was the same manifestation of God's presence seen throughout scripture. But then in the Garden of Gethsamane, the cloud was hidden. Jesus was in agony and prayed more earnestly, and His sweat became like drops of blood falling to

the ground.' The glory of God was hidden from him – no cloud, no light, only the dark night of obedience. God was silent. This was the cloud of darkness. Why, because of us. Our sins, failures, depression, sorrow, pains, sicknesses. So that when Jesus was resurrected, the cloud of glory returns to your life. So that it is possible today, to have Jesus, our cloud of glory to be with us, protecting us, guiding us and having his presence with us whatever we faces in life.



