



## **Some Gifts of God's Grace** **Genesis 8:13-22; 9:11-13**

*And when the Lord smelled the pleasing aroma, the Lord said in his heart, "I will never again curse the ground because of man, for the intention of man's heart is evil from his youth. Neither will I ever again strike down every living creature as I have done" (Genesis 8:21—ESV).*

Imagine living in a world where you believed in God and tried to do right while *everyone* else only thought of doing evil, where violence increased around you daily, where you were vilified *everyday by everyone*. Noah and his family faced that situation before God sent the great flood (see Genesis 6:5, 11, 13). After the flood, God said He would never again destroy all living creatures with a flood, and He set His rainbow in the sky as a pledge and symbol of His covenant and promise. God's rainbow remains a sign of God's grace, for even though human hearts have inclined toward evil since childhood or youth, God promised never to send a universal flood again. To restrain our evil tendencies and violent actions, God began giving moral laws to humanity, laws that coincided with the conscience He instilled within each person. God gave some of His moral laws to Noah and supremely through Moses in the Ten Commandments. God's moral laws require enforcement by human governments. When law enforcement is ignored, immorality and violence naturally increase. The tendency to sin and the refusal to enforce and obey God's moral laws with justice and mercy reveal our need of a Savior. To meet our need, God sent His only Son, Jesus Christ, into the world to suffer on a cross and die as a sacrifice for our sins. After Jesus conquered death and rose from the grave, God won the hearts and minds of believers. Today, Jesus still gives His loving Holy Spirit to live within those who believe in Him. and His Spirit now guides their thoughts and actions. The fruit of His Spirit in them is "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law" (Galatians 5:22-23).