

Sunday January 15th 2017
For Jews Request a Sign.....
Part Seventeen

1). Joh 6:48 *"I am the bread of life. 49 "Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and are dead. 50 "This is the bread which comes down from heaven, that one may eat of it and not die. 51 "I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world." 52 The Jews therefore quarreled among themselves, saying, "How can this Man give us His flesh to eat?" 53 Then Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you. 54 "Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. 55 "For My flesh is food indeed, and My blood is drink indeed. 56 "He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him. 57 "As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who feeds on Me will live because of Me. 58 "This is the bread which came down from heaven--not as your fathers ate the manna, and are dead. He who eats this bread will live forever."*

a). We will remember from last time that the words spoken by the Lord in these verses to the multitude are spoken within the context of His conversation with them following the miraculous multiplication of the barley loaves with which He had fed the 5000.

b). And we had seen that this, the 4th sign, was performed with both a mountain and the Passover in view – the mountain speaks of Christ's Millennial Kingdom and the Passover of the death of the firstborn.

c). We can then add to these two elements the significance found in the 5 barley loaves – 5 is of course a number associated with grace and barley is a grain seen in connection with the feast of firstfruits.

d). We might remember from our study of the Book of Ruth that Ruth and Naomi arrived in Bethlehem at a very specific time - Ru 1:22 *So Naomi returned, and Ruth the Moabitess her daughter-in-law with her, who returned*

from the country of Moab. Now they came to Bethlehem at the beginning of barley harvest.

And we will remember that Ruth worked in Boaz's field until the end of barley harvest and the end of wheat harvest. The barley harvest we might also remember had to do with work that can only be done in resurrection, walking in the Spirit, and the wheat harvest pointed to that which can only be accomplished as a result of walking in newness of life – dying to self.

e). Barley and wheat were sown at 2 different times of the year which meant that barley was the first grain to be harvested and therefore was the sheaf of grain that was waved before the Lord on the feast of firstfruits –
Le 23:9 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 10 "Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: 'When you come into the land which I give to you, and reap its harvest, then you shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest to the priest. 11 'He shall wave the sheaf before the LORD, to be accepted on your behalf; on the day after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it.

And it was of course on the feast of firstfruits, the day after the Sabbath, on the 3rd day following His crucifixion that Jesus was raised from the dead giving the inseparable link between firstfruits, barley and resurrection.

f). So then the barley loaves point to resurrection in a twofold manner. Firstly, following Passover it looks to the Lord's resurrection and His return to heaven to receive for Himself a Kingdom and, secondly it speaks of a resurrected Israel, by the grace of God, following the application of the blood of the Paschal Lamb slain at Calvary in that future day.

g). That food then which the nation is to receive in resurrection as a result of national repentance, following Passover, pictured in the healing of the nobleman's son and the man at the pool of Bethesda, is not just physical food, supernaturally provided, but is more importantly spiritual food, the bread of life, the Word of God; the Word of God in that day will be received, believed and implemented as pictured through the water turned to wine in the first sign at Cana of Galilee and the type of Jonah preaching the Gospel to Nineveh after 3 days in the belly of the great fish - *Jon 2:1 ¶ Then Jonah prayed to the LORD his God from the fish's belly. 2 And he said: "I cried out to the LORD because of my affliction, And He answered me. "Out of the belly of Sheol I cried, And You heard my voice. 3 For You cast me into the deep, Into the heart of the seas, And the floods surrounded me; All Your billows and Your waves passed over*

me. 4 Then I said, 'I have been cast out of Your sight; Yet I will look again toward Your holy temple.'..... 3:1 ¶ Now the word of the LORD came to Jonah the second time, saying, 2 "Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and preach to it the message that I tell you." 3 So Jonah arose and went to Nineveh, according to the word of the LORD.

And it is of course this spiritual food, the Living Word and the written Word which the Lord is referring to in the opening verses this morning when He says, 'Unless you eat My flesh and drink My blood you have no life in you.'

h). And as we also saw last week because of this saying many of His disciples walked with Him no more - Joh 6:60 ¶ *Therefore many of His disciples, when they heard this, said, "This is a hard [offensive and intolerable] saying; who can understand it?"66 From that time many of His disciples went back [to the things they had previously left behind] and walked with Him no more.*

The question, 'Who can understand it?' again demonstrates the sadness of their situation and the poverty of their scriptural understanding, because that which Jesus said which had offended them had been clearly set out through several types in the Books of Moses for those with eyes to see and could have been seen in connection with the nation's deliverance. And this should not have been lost on John's audience, those for whom the signs were recorded.

2). Ex 12:5 'Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats. 6 'Now you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month. Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at twilight. 7 'And they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses where they eat it. 8 'Then they shall eat the flesh on that night;

The instructions that the Lord gives to Moses concerning the Passover are quite clear – the Passover lamb was to be killed at twilight and its blood applied to the doorposts and lintel and following the application of the blood the flesh of the lamb was to be eaten.

a). Christ is the Passover Lamb who has already been slain at twilight and in that future day, following the application of the blood, the nation of

Israel is to eat the flesh of the Lamb, just as Jesus told them they should do – ‘Unless you eat My flesh.....’.

b). And again, as we have seen, this is not a literal eating of a literal flesh when it comes to Christ - Joh 1:14 *And the Word became flesh*
It is rather feeding on the bread of life, the Word of God which is alive and powerful.

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c). With all this in mind let’s note that the first generation to come out of Egypt and all subsequent generations until Christ ate the literal flesh of the slain Passover lambs year by year over centuries of time. And those who walked away from the Lord because of what He said had done this very same thing themselves throughout their lifetime.

d). And so when Jesus says they must eat His flesh and drink His blood if they are to have life in the age to come, not only is He referring to what must take place in that future day, but is also clearly identifying Himself as the Lamb that must be slain for the nation; something they had already heard from the mouth of John the Baptist - Joh 1:29 ¶ *The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"*

e). What we see then with the first Passover is the establishment of a pattern and an unalterable spiritual truth – Following events to do with the death of the firstborn, the Passover, there must then be an eating of the flesh.

f). And this picture is added to further through the supernatural provision of the manna - Ex 16:12 *"I have heard the complaints of the children of Israel. Speak to them, saying, 'At twilight you shall eat meat, and in the morning you shall be filled with bread. And you shall know that I am the LORD your God.'"*

It is the manna that the multitude refer to in John Chapter 6 when asking the Lord for a sign after the feeding of the 5000 - Joh 6:30 *Therefore they said to Him, "What sign will You perform then, that we may see it and believe You? What work will You do? 31 "Our fathers ate the manna in the desert; as it is written, 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.'"*

g). And it is the manna that Jesus refers to in responding to the multitude's request, which leads into His statement about eating His flesh and drinking His blood which we saw in the opening verses - Joh 6:48 *"I am the bread of life. 49 "Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and are dead.*

h). The manna was supernaturally provided, brought forth from above we might say, to sustain the children of Israel on their journey to the land of promise. And this supernatural provision took place following Passover and following the nation's resurrection from the Red Sea as they were led by the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night toward the goal of their calling.

i). So then, whether we are looking at eating the flesh of the slain lamb or eating the manna we are seeing the same thing – that which has been provided to give sustenance during the pilgrim journey – a physical sustenance that points to a supernaturally supplied spiritual sustenance – Ex 19:3 *And Moses went up to God, and the LORD called to him from the mountain, saying, "Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel:.....8 Then all the people answered together and said, "All that the LORD has spoken we will do." So Moses brought back the words of the people to the LORD.*

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3). Now as well as eating His flesh the Lord also said it is necessary to drink His blood and this statement as well has its origins in Israel's wilderness journey and is inseparably connected with that which have just been studying- Ex 17:6 *"Behold, I will stand before you there on the rock in Horeb; and you shall strike the rock, and water will come out of it, that the people may drink." And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel.*

In this verse from Exodus we see that Moses is commanded to strike the rock which would result in water coming from the rock for the people to drink.

a). By comparing scripture with scripture we know that the Rock Moses struck was Christ - 1Co 10:3 *all ate the same spiritual food, 4 and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ.*

The striking of the Rock, the striking of Christ, points to His crucifixion in one direction and that which had previously happened in Egypt, which also pointed to the same thing, the death of the Passover lambs, in the other.

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b). Putting this together with that which we have previously learned we see once again that it is only following events surrounding the death of the firstborn, the slaying of the Passover lambs/the crucifixion of Christ, that spiritual drink becomes available. So whether we are dealing with the flesh of the lambs, the manna or the water from the Rock we are dealing with things only available to those who have already passed from death to life – things that provide the spiritual sustenance necessary to reach the goal of one's calling - that which we know to be the Word of God as the Holy Spirit guides us into all truth.

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c). And as we saw in past weeks this is exactly what the Lord's conversation with the Samaritan woman is about - Joh 4:13 *Jesus answered and said to her, "Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, 14 "but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting [age lasting] life."*

As we saw at the time we studied this, the 'living water' that Christ was offering seen in conjunction with Jacob's well provided us with a picture of the scriptures that had been given to Israel. In this sense the living water, the manna and the flesh of the Passover lambs all speak of exactly the same thing, the written Word of God that is God breathed which is inseparable from the One who is the Word made flesh.

d). So how does the living water, the Word, connect with drinking the Lord's blood?

e). Well we can begin to make the connection with familiar verses from Ephesians - Eph 5:25 *Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, 26 that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, 27 that He might present her to Himself a*

glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.

Here we can clearly see that central to the preparation of the Bride of Christ, who the Lord will present to Himself in that day, is sanctification and cleansing and this is to be accomplished through 'the washing of water by the word'.

f). It is then the Word of God, the same Word seen in the living water offered to the Samaritan woman and the water coming from the Rock in Exodus, that is to wash us in order to cleanse us. And in conjunction with this there is a continuous action by the Living Word, the Lord Jesus Christ, as our High Priest that accomplishes this - 1Jo 1:7 *But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and **the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.** 8 ¶ If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 9 **If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.** 10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.*

g). So the process to our sanctification and cleansing that we may be a part of the Bride of Christ is clear. As we properly engage with the scriptures, the living water, so our sin of unbelief in all its various manifestations becomes apparent and as we recognize this and confess our sins, the sins of the saved, to our High Priest, so it is His blood on the Mercy Seat in the Heavenly Tabernacle, the same blood shed at Calvary, that cleanses us from all unrighteousness. And this is to be our continual practice.

h). And it is the continual cleansing of our sin through Christ's blood on the Mercy Seat that is to be seen in the command, 'Drink My blood'.

i). This being the case it is an easy thing to see why a failure to eat His flesh and drink His blood would result in us having no life in us for the age to come. Just remember what it was that prevented that first generation of eternally saved Jews from receiving their inheritance in the land of promise - Heb 3:17 *Now with whom was He angry forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose corpses fell in the wilderness? 18 And to whom did He swear that they would not enter His rest, but to those who did not obey? 19 So we see that they could not enter in because of **unbelief.***

And it was exactly the same sin of unbelief that prevented the generation of eternally saved Jews at Christ's first advent from receiving their inheritance in the heavenly realm of the Kingdom which the Lord came to offer them – Joh 5:46 *"For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote about Me. 47 "But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?"*

And also let's remember what the scriptures say about this same sin with respect to ourselves - Heb 12:1 ¶ *Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin [the sin of unbelief] which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, 2 looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. [And is now our High Priest providing for our cleansing]*

4). Now if we look at that which is clearly laid out for us with regards to Christ's blood and His High Priestly ministry in these NT scriptures we know that this must also be set out for us in OT typology – and needless to say this is exactly what we find – Nu 20:7 *Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 8 "Take the rod; you and your brother Aaron gather the congregation together. Speak to the rock before their eyes, and it will yield its water; thus you shall bring water for them out of the rock, and give drink to the congregation and their animals." 9 So Moses took the rod from before the LORD as He commanded him. 10 And Moses and Aaron gathered the assembly together before the rock; and he said to them, "Hear now, you rebels! Must we bring water for you out of this rock?" 11 Then Moses lifted his hand and struck the rock twice with his rod; and water came out abundantly, and the congregation and their animals drank. 12 Then the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, "Because you did not believe Me, to hallow Me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this assembly into the land which I have given them."*

The event recorded here in Numbers took place towards the end of Moses' ministry, towards the end of the 40 years wandering in the wilderness and we can see a significant difference to the parallel event that took place towards the beginning of Moses ministry that we read in Exodus 17:6.

a). On this occasion, recorded in Numbers, Moses was commanded to speak to the Rock to obtain water, not strike it. And in a willful act of disobedience Moses not only struck the Rock but struck it twice.

b). And yet, despite Moses' disobedient act, despite striking the Rock instead of speaking to it, water still came out and came out abundantly. Why would this be the case?

c). There was also an extremely serious consequence for Moses. Because of his disobedience he was not allowed to 'bring this assembly into the land which I have given them'; which after leading them for 40 years in the wilderness would have been hard – but as we know – Ac 13:39 *"and by Him everyone who believes is justified from all things from which you could not be justified by the law of Moses."*

Ga 3:11 But that no one is justified by the law in the sight of God is evident, for "the just shall live by faith."

Heb 7:19 for the law made nothing perfect; on the other hand, there is the bringing in of a better hope, through which we draw near to God.

As the law made nothing perfect, brought nothing to completion and justified no one, so Moses as a picture of the law could not be the one to take the people into the land of promise, providing a foundational type for the inefficacy of the law in this respect. Instead there was to be 'the bringing in of a better hope' by faith, pictured in foundation through Joshua taking the second generation into the land as a type, looking to the day when Christ [remember Joshua and Jesus are the same name] will take the people into the land under the new covenant following national repentance at the beginning of the Millennial Kingdom.

d). So, to back up a little, Moses was told to speak to the Rock to get water, which has echoes of the Lord's encounter with the Samaritan woman - Joh 4:10 *Jesus answered and said to her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, 'Give Me a drink,' you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water."*

But as we see, Moses did not speak to the Rock he struck the Rock, twice.

e). Well striking the Rock here in Numbers can only take us to the same place as striking the Rock in Exodus – to the slaying of the Passover lambs

during the course of the wilderness journey, beginning in Egypt, on the one hand and to the crucifixion of Christ on the other. But what would be the significance of striking the Rock twice? What are we supposed to learn from this?

f). To begin to answer our questions we need to note something important that our English translation doesn't give to us – the word translated 'rock' in Exodus is an entirely different word from the word translated 'rock' in Numbers. Both words are correctly translated as 'rock', but the word in Numbers has to do with a rock that is high and lifted up, something not seen at all in the word in Exodus.

g). So what are we to make of the Rock that is high and lifted up? Well, if we remember what the scriptures say about the birth of Jesus and what Jesus says about Himself to Pilate all should become clear - Mt 2:2..... *"Where is He who has been born King of the Jews?"*

Joh 18:37 Pilate therefore said to Him, "Are You a king then?" Jesus answered, "You say rightly that I am a king. For this cause I was born, and for this cause I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice."

Jesus was born King of the Jews and it was in this exalted position, high and lifted up, that Jesus came to the nation of Israel, to His own things. He did not come to them as the lowly Rock in Exodus, but as the exalted Rock in Numbers and it was Christ the King who was struck by Israel in the antitype of the Rock in Numbers. Remember the inscription placed upon the Lord's cross at His crucifixion - Joh 19:19 ¶ *Now Pilate wrote a title and put it on the cross. And the writing was: JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS.*

h). Well, what we have just seen will explain the striking of the Rock as seen in Numbers, but we still need to understand what we are to learn from the Rock being struck twice.

i). This though will have to wait until next time – if the Lord is willing.