

Sunday March 5th 2017
For Jews Request a Sign.....
Part Twenty Four

1). Joh 11:1 ¶ *Now a certain man was sick, Lazarus of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha. 2 It was that Mary who anointed the Lord with fragrant oil and wiped His feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick. 3 Therefore the sisters sent to Him, saying, "Lord, behold, he whom You love is sick." 4 When Jesus heard that, He said, "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it." 5 Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. 6 So, when He heard that he was sick, He stayed two more days in the place where He was. 7 Then after this He said to the disciples, "Let us go to Judea again.".....17 ¶ So when Jesus came, He found that he had already been in the tomb four days.*

a). We had seen last time that Lazarus, dead and in the tomb, pictured for us the nation of Israel who had been in the place of death with respect to her calling for 4 days, 4000 years. And if we follow the picture given through the sign we will see that the Lord returning to Judea after 2 days takes us to the return of Christ to the earth at the conclusion of the Tribulation, following the 2 days, 2000 years, of this dispensation on the one hand and at the end of the 2 days, 2000 years, of the Jewish dispensation brought to its conclusion through the Tribulation, on the other.

b). And as we consider this we will remember that Christ's return must be triggered by Israel's repentance, something not pictured in the account of Lazarus, but brought about during a time that is described as follows in – Mt 24:21 *"For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. 22 "And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened.*

And in the midst of this time of unparalleled tribulation we are given a glimpse into the heavens at events surrounding the opening of the 5th seal on the 7 sealed scroll with regards to some of those who have been killed during

the time seen in Matthew 24 - Re 6:9 ¶ *When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held. 10 And they cried with a loud voice, saying, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?" 11 Then a white robe was given to each of them; and it was said to them that they should rest a little while longer, until both the number of their fellow servants and their brethren, who would be killed as they were, was completed.*

c). The answer to their question, 'How long....' is given in the second half of v11, but we can put this same answer another way, saying exactly the same thing – until Israel repents.

d). The Lord will not and cannot act to bring an end to the destruction and carnage upon the earth apart from Israel's repentance as this is the whole reason for this devastating time in the first place.

e). Let's keep in mind that the Holocaust was not sufficient to bring Israel to repentance – consequently the Lord will allow events on the earth to get as bad as they need to in order to fulfill His purpose with respect to His wayward firstborn son.

2). And we have gained some insight into this whole picture of the time of Jacob's trouble through our previous studies of the opening of the first 4 seals on the 7 sealed scroll and the horseman who rides forth as these seals are opened, providing us with an overall, skeleton, picture of the 7 years of Daniel's 70th week.

a). It all begins we will remember with the signing of the peace treaty with Antichrist, pictured through the opening of the first seal on the scroll – Re 6:1 ¶ *Now I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals; and I heard one of the four living creatures saying with a voice like thunder, "Come and see." 2 And I looked, and behold, a white horse. He who sat on it had a bow; and a crown was given to him, and he went out conquering and to conquer.*

And what we see here, with the signing of this treaty between 'many' in Israel and the one who is the complete antithesis of everything that is God, had already been anticipated at the time of the Lord's crucifixion - Joh 19:15 *But they cried out, "Away with Him, away with Him! Crucify Him!" Pilate said to*

them, "Shall I crucify your King?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but Caesar!"

And it has its origins in the wilderness journey - Ex 32:1 ¶ Now when the people saw that Moses delayed coming down from the mountain, the people gathered together to Aaron, and said to him, "Come, make us gods that shall go before us; for as for this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him." 2 And Aaron said to them, "Break off the golden earrings which are in the ears of your wives, your sons, and your daughters, and bring them to me." 3 "So all the people broke off the golden earrings which were in their ears, and brought them to Aaron. 4 And he received the gold from their hand, and he fashioned it with an engraving tool, and made a molded calf. Then they said, "This is your god, O Israel, that brought you out of the land of Egypt!" 5 So when Aaron saw it, he built an altar before it. And Aaron made a proclamation and said, "Tomorrow is a feast to the LORD."

b). These actions on Israel's part we had seen last time described in – Isa 28:14 ¶ *Therefore hear the word of the LORD, you scornful men, Who rule this people who are in Jerusalem, 15 Because you have said, "We have made a covenant with death, And with Sheol we are in agreement. When the overflowing scourge passes through, It will not come to us, For we have made lies our refuge, And under falsehood we have hidden ourselves." 16 Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: "Behold, I lay in Zion a stone for a foundation, A tried stone, a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation; Whoever believes will not act hastily. 17 Also I will make justice the measuring line, And righteousness the plummet; The hail will sweep away the refuge of lies, And the waters will overflow the hiding place. 18 Your covenant with death will be annulled, And your agreement with Sheol will not stand; When the overflowing scourge passes through, Then you will be trampled down by it. 19 As often as it goes out it will take you; For morning by morning it will pass over, And by day and by night; It will be a terror just to understand the report."*

Now, although the nation making a covenant with Death and being in agreement with Sheol can be traced back to Israel coming out of Egypt and can certainly be seen in the rejection of their King and their embracing of Caesar, a Gentile ruler in the kingdom of Satan, on the day of the Lord's crucifixion, the

fullness of this finds its expression in the covenant made with Antichrist – the rider on the white horse.

c). And we can see this clearly from Antichrist's description as he rides forth on the pale horse, his true nature and purpose having been revealed – *Re 6:7 When He opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature saying, "Come and see." 8 So I looked, and behold, a pale horse. And the name of him who sat on it was Death, and Hades followed with him. And power was given to them over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword, with hunger, with death, and by the beasts of the earth.*

Here we can clearly see that as Antichrist rides forth on the pale horse he is now synonymous with Death and the place of the dead, Hades [Sheol in Hebrew] followed with him.

d). As a consequence of signing the peace treaty with the rider on the white horse Israel will unintentionally on their part make a covenant with Death – a covenant that can only bring them to the condition described through the opening of the 4th seal and the pale horse.

e). And interestingly the word translated 'pale' comes from the Greek word for green 'chloros', and is used as a descriptive adjective to denote a particular shade of color – this then should be seen as a 'greenish' horse, a sickly green – a horse with the pallor of corruption and decay and this is particularly apt in this setting as we see that Death and Hades are given power over a fourth of the earth *to kill with sword, with hunger, with death [pestilence and disease], and by the beasts of the earth* – a number which at current estimates would be something over 1 ½ billion people.

f). And that which we see with the rider on the pale horse is the outworking of that which we have seen through the rides of the previous horses, the white, the red and the black - *Re 6:3 ¶ When He opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature saying, "Come and see." 4 Another horse, fiery red, went out. And it was granted to the one who sat on it to take peace from the earth, and that people should kill one another; and there was given to him a great sword. 5 When He opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature say, "Come and see." So I looked, and behold, a black horse, and he who sat on it had a pair of scales in his hand. 6 And I heard a voice in the midst of the four living creatures saying, "A quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius; and do not harm the oil and the wine."*

g). The pair of scales in the hand of the rider on the black horse speaks of famine and famine will exist in the earth at this time to an extent it has not previously been seen, with the disease that always accompanies it being rampant because peace will have been taken from the earth by the rider on the red horse who has a great sword. However this situation with regards to famine will have already been in place from the beginning of the Tribulation, just as the Lord has prophesied – Mt 24:7 *"For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places. 8 "All these are the beginning of sorrows. 9 "Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name's sake.*

And this is a situation that would not be hard to imagine following the rapture of the church with the ensuing collapse of infrastructure and supply chains and food processing in a nation such as the USA for example, and keep in mind with this that even today food production worldwide cannot keep pace with population increase and if we then factor into this the effect of nation rising against nation – an effect that we have witnessed in these past months in Yemen and Syria – all would be clear to see. And with regards to that future day this is a situation that can only deteriorate more and more rapidly as we move beyond the mid-point in the Tribulation.

h). And for the Jews in particular this situation can only be exacerbated through the unprecedented persecution that will be poured out against them - Mt 24:10 *"And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another. 11 "Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. 12 "And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold.*

There will even be internal strife among the Jewish people themselves, with Jews delivering up Jews to death and as the nation is taken away into captivity they will no longer have access to food supplies as they may have previously had, being instead, totally reliant upon their captors or those who would seek to help them - Re 13:16 *He causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads, 17 and that no one may buy or sell except one who has the mark or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.*

Mt 25:34 *"Then the King will say to those on His right hand, 'Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: 35 'for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; 36 'I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.' 37 "Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink? 38 'When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You? 39 'Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?'* 40 *"And the King will answer and say to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.'*

i). These years of worldwide famine during the Tribulation were foretold in the days of Joseph and his brothers - Ge 41:56 *The famine was over all the face of the earth, and Joseph opened all the storehouses and sold to the Egyptians. And the famine became severe in the land of Egypt. 57 So all countries came to Joseph in Egypt to buy grain, because the famine was severe in all lands.*

And were similarly pictured during the days of Elijah and Elisha – 2Ki 6:24 ¶ *And it happened after this that Ben-Hadad king of Syria gathered all his army, and went up and besieged Samaria. 25 And there was a great famine in Samaria; and indeed they besieged it until a donkey's head was sold for eighty shekels of silver, and one-fourth of a kab of dove droppings for five shekels of silver. 26 Then, as the king of Israel was passing by on the wall, a woman cried out to him, saying, "Help, my lord, O king!" 27 And he said, "If the LORD does not help you, where can I find help for you? From the threshing floor or from the winepress?" 28 Then the king said to her, "What is troubling you?" And she answered, "This woman said to me, 'Give your son, that we may eat him today, and we will eat my son tomorrow.' 29 "So we boiled my son, and ate him. And I said to her on the next day, 'Give your son, that we may eat him'; but she has hidden her son." 30 Now it happened, when the king heard the words of the woman, that he tore his clothes; and as he passed by on the wall, the people looked, and there underneath he had sackcloth on his body.*

j). And we will remember that Elijah appears again on the earth, with Moses – the 2 witnesses – during the first half of the Tribulation and again

with the Lord when He returns to the earth at the conclusion of the Tribulation when we would expect to see similar circumstances again to those that existed in his day. So, is there anything else said prophetically about this future time of famine? Yes, there is - Eze 5:5 ¶ *"Thus says the Lord GOD: 'This is Jerusalem; I have set her in the midst of the nations and the countries all around her. 6 'She has rebelled against My judgments by doing wickedness more than the nations, and against My statutes more than the countries that are all around her; for they have refused My judgments, and they have not walked in My statutes.' 7 "Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: 'Because you have multiplied disobedience more than the nations that are all around you, have not walked in My statutes nor kept My judgments, nor even done according to the judgments of the nations that are all around you' - 8 "therefore thus says the Lord GOD: 'Indeed I, even I, am against you and will execute judgments in your midst in the sight of the nations. 9 'And I will do among you what I have never done, and the like of which I will never do again, because of all your abominations. 10 'Therefore fathers shall eat their sons in your midst, and sons shall eat their fathers; and I will execute judgments among you, and all of you who remain I will scatter to all the winds. 11 'Therefore, as I live,' says the Lord GOD, 'surely, because you have defiled My sanctuary with all your detestable things and with all your abominations, therefore I will also diminish you; My eye will not spare, nor will I have any pity. 12 'One-third of you shall die of the pestilence, and be consumed with famine in your midst; and one-third shall fall by the sword all around you; and I will scatter another third to all the winds, and I will draw out a sword after them. 13 'Thus shall My anger be spent, and I will cause My fury to rest upon them, and I will be avenged; and they shall know that I, the LORD, have spoken it in My zeal, when I have spent My fury upon them.*

So bad then will this time of famine be that amongst the Jewish people at least, fathers shall eat their sons and sons shall eat their fathers. Such is the horror to be seen on the face of the earth just some few years ahead of where we are now.

k). Given then the sign of Lazarus in the tomb and all that the Lord would know the sign points to is it any wonder that we read - Joh 11:35 *Jesus wept.*

3). Joh 11:36 *Then the Jews said, "See how He loved him!" 37 And some of them said, "Could not this Man, who opened the eyes of the blind, also have kept this*

man from dying?" 38 Then Jesus, again groaning in Himself, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone lay against it.

We see in v38 'Jesus, again groaning in Himself', literally, being indignant in Himself and the reason for His indignation can be traced to the question asked in v37. Again the Jews failed to understand anything, including that prophesied in their own scriptures.

a). In one sense it would be perfectly true to say that the Lord could have kept Lazarus from dying, but given what his death and resurrection point to there was no way that this was going to take place.

b). In the foreknowledge of God, in accordance with His pre-ordained timing, Lazarus's death and resurrection is for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it as it declares the certainty of a resurrected and healed Israel, just as the prophets had spoken - Joh 11:40 *Jesus said to her, "Did I not say to you that if you would believe you would see the glory of God?"*

Although God is omnipotent, is all powerful, He will not, does not, and indeed cannot act outside of that which He has said in His Word - Ps 138:2 *I will worship toward Your holy temple, And praise Your name For Your lovingkindness and Your truth; For You have magnified Your word above all Your name.*

Lu 24:44 Then He said to them, "These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me."

c). Joh 11:39 *Jesus said, "Take away the stone." Martha, the sister of him who was dead, said to Him, "Lord, by this time there is a stench, for he has been dead four days." 40 Jesus said to her, "Did I not say to you that if you would believe you would see the glory of God?" 41 Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead man was lying. And Jesus lifted up His eyes and said, "Father, I thank You that You have heard Me. 42 "And I know that You always hear Me, but because of the people who are standing by I said this, that they may believe that You sent Me." 43 Now when He had said these things, He cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth!"*

We can see from the verses we have just read that a stone covers the entrance to the cave that is Lazarus's tomb, and the stone must be removed in order to let Lazarus come out. And we can see that Martha is concerned that there will be 'a stench', as you would expect with a decaying corpse – but even Martha's seemingly natural observation here provides a link to the same time in Israel's history yet future depicted through the sign, prophetically recorded in –
Isa 3:18 In that day the Lord will take away the finery: The jingling anklets, the scarves, and the crescents; 19 The pendants, the bracelets, and the veils; 20 The headdresses, the leg ornaments, and the headbands; The perfume boxes, the charms, 21 and the rings; The nose jewels, 22 the festal apparel, and the mantles; The outer garments, the purses, 23 and the mirrors; The fine linen, the turbans, and the robes. 24 And so it shall be: Instead of a sweet smell there will be a stench;

We will need to continue with this next time though – if the Lord is willing.