

Sunday March 19th 2017
For Jews Request a Sign.....
Part Twenty Six

1). 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?" 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!" 44 And he who had died came out bound hand and foot with graveclothes, and his face was wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Loose him, and let him go."*

We had seen last time the incredible significance of Israel's repentance to the fulfillment of God's plans and purposes not only for the Millennial Kingdom, but also for the endless ages beyond. In one respect we could say that all is dependent upon this one event – an event towards which God has been working throughout the whole of Israel's history.

a). And as we again consider the horror of the final 7 years of Man's Day pictured through Lazarus in the tomb and even think about the state of the world as we witness it every day, let's just compare these times with the description the scriptures give us of the world during the Millennial Kingdom, with particular reference to the experience of the Jewish people -
Isa 11:5 Righteousness shall be the belt of His loins, And faithfulness the belt of His waist. 6 "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, The leopard shall lie down with the young goat, The calf and the young lion and the fatling together; And a little child shall lead them. 7 The cow and the bear shall graze; Their young ones shall lie down together; And the lion shall eat straw like the ox. 8 The nursing child shall play by the cobra's hole, And the weaned child shall put his hand in the viper's den. 9 They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain, For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD As the waters cover the sea. 10 ¶ "And in that day there shall be a Root of Jesse, Who shall stand as a banner

to the people; For the Gentiles shall seek Him, And His resting place shall be glorious." [Lit. Glory]

Eze 34:11 'For thus says the Lord GOD: "Indeed I Myself will search for My sheep and seek them out. 12 "As a shepherd seeks out his flock on the day he is among his scattered sheep, so will I seek out My sheep and deliver them from all the places where they were scattered on a cloudy and dark day. 13 "And I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land; I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, in the valleys and in all the inhabited places of the country. 14 "I will feed them in good pasture, and their fold shall be on the high mountains of Israel. There they shall lie down in a good fold and feed in rich pasture on the mountains of Israel. 15 "I will feed My flock, and I will make them lie down," says the Lord GOD.....23 "I will establish one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them-My servant David. He shall feed them and be their shepherd. 24 "And I, the LORD, will be their God, and My servant David a prince among them; I, the LORD, have spoken. 25 "I will make a covenant of peace with them, and cause wild beasts to cease from the land; and they will dwell safely in the wilderness and sleep in the woods. 26 "I will make them and the places all around My hill a blessing; and I will cause showers to come down in their season; there shall be showers of blessing.

Such is what awaits Israel's repentance – Peace, righteousness, faithfulness and showers of blessing – conditions upon the earth that we have never seen taking us back to conditions in the Garden before the fall - Ac 3:20 *"and that He may send Jesus Christ, who was preached to you before, 21 "whom heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began.*

A restoration of the atmospheric and climatic conditions that existed before the flood and for the first time a Man and a Woman, Christ and His Bride and God the Father and His Wife, ruling the earth together in a marriage relationship in fulfillment of that set out in the opening chapters of Genesis – Isa 46:9 *Remember the former things of old, For I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me, 10 Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times things that are not yet done, Saying, 'My counsel shall stand, And I will do all My pleasure,'*

And all of this is just some few short years beyond where we find ourselves today, just on the horizon; so close we can almost touch it.

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b). So, with the certainty of these incredible promises and the certainty of all these events in mind let's make sure that we do not fall short of the glory of God in that day, but rather take heed to the words of the Holy Spirit penned by Jude at the beginning of his Book - Jude 1:3 ¶ *Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for [Lit. with respect to] the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints. 4 For certain men have crept in unnoticed, who long ago were marked out for this condemnation, ungodly men, who turn the grace of our God into lewdness and deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ. 5 But I want to remind you, though you once knew this, that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed those who did not believe.*

What awaits the earth and those left in it and ourselves in the very, very near future is spectacular beyond description and all we have to do is to choose to remain faithfully obedient to the Word to have a significant part in it. Do not miss this.

2). To return to the sign itself for a moment, let's look at the impact the raising of Lazarus had upon the Jewish people - Joh 12:1 ¶ *Then, six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany.....12 ¶ The next day a great multitude that had come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, 13 took branches of palm trees and went out to meet Him, and cried out: "Hosanna! 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!' The King of Israel!" 14 Then Jesus, when He had found a young donkey, sat on it; as it is written: 15 "Fear not, daughter of Zion; Behold, your King is coming, Sitting on a donkey's colt." 16 His disciples did not understand these things at first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things were written about Him and that they had done these things to Him. 17 Therefore the people, who were with Him when He called Lazarus out of his tomb and raised him from the dead, bore witness. 18 For this reason the people also met Him, because they heard that He had done this sign.*

The timing seen in these events and the events themselves can only foreshadow the events that will take place in that future Day, the 7th Day, when the Passover will be fulfilled and Christ will rule as King.

a). We see that the people who were with Jesus when He raised Lazarus from the dead bore witness to who He is and that people also met Him as he entered Jerusalem because they had heard He had done this sign and their actions and their words declare the Messiah and His Kingdom, they, *took branches of palm trees and went out to meet Him, and cried out: "Hosanna! 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!' The King of Israel!"*

Just as those Jews in that day, following the Tribulation, will bear witness to the raising of Israel and will declare the Messiah and His Kingdom and let's remember what Jesus said about this - Mt 23:38 *"See! Your house is left to you desolate; 39 "for I say to you, you shall see Me no more till you say, 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!'"*

b). The branches of palm trees that they went out to meet Him with as He entered Jerusalem are a picture reference to the feast of Tabernacles also called Booths, the 7th of the 7 feasts given to Israel, a feast that finds it's fulfillment in the Millennial Kingdom when God will again 'tabernacle' with His people; a feast that was set in place for the people prior to their entry into the land - Le 23:40 *'And you shall take for yourselves on the first day the fruit of beautiful trees, branches of palm trees, the boughs of leafy trees, and willows of the brook; and you shall rejoice before the LORD your God for seven days. 41 'You shall keep it as a feast to the LORD for seven days in the year. It shall be a statute forever in your generations. You shall celebrate it in the seventh month. 42 'You shall dwell in booths for seven days. All who are native Israelites shall dwell in booths, 43 'that your generations may know that I made the children of Israel dwell in booths when I brought them out of the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God.'" 44 So Moses declared to the children of Israel the feasts of the LORD.*

And this is what we find in Nehemiah with respect to the people's return from captivity and the subsequent rebuilding of Jerusalem, foreshadowing events at the end of the Tribulation - Ne 8:14 *And they found written in the Law, which the LORD had commanded by Moses, that the children of Israel should dwell in*

booths during the feast of the seventh month, 15 and that they should announce and proclaim in all their cities and in Jerusalem, saying, "Go out to the mountain, and bring olive branches, branches of oil trees, myrtle branches, palm branches, and branches of leafy trees, to make booths, as it is written."

And this scene is repeated after a slightly different fashion in the Book of the Revelation but also with Christ's Kingdom in view - Re 7:9 *After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands, 10 and crying out with a loud voice, saying, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!"*

The palm branches in these verses again giving a reference to Tabernacles, the 7th Day, the Millennial Kingdom for which these individuals wait.

c). And we will remember that it was after 6 days, therefore on the 7th day, that Jesus took Peter, James and John up on a high mountain and was transfigured in His Kingdom Glory, bringing this response from Peter to what he saw – Mt 17:4 *Then Peter answered and said to Jesus, "Lord, it is good for us to be here; if You wish, let us make here three tabernacles: one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah."*

Given the events that Peter had just witnessed with Christ coming in His Kingdom, he could really make no other response than to look to the feast of Tabernacles and the Kingdom it pictures.

d). And then the Lord entering Jerusalem on a donkey's colt is another Messianic statement drawing from - Zec 9:9 ¶ *"Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King is coming to you; He is just and having salvation, Lowly and riding on a donkey, A colt, the foal of a donkey."*

And foreshadowed in Solomon's coronation as seen in - 1Ki 1:29 *And the king took an oath and said, "As the LORD lives, who has redeemed my life from every distress, 30 "just as I swore to you by the LORD God of Israel, saying, 'Assuredly Solomon your son shall be king after me, and he shall sit on my throne in my place,' so I certainly will do this day." 31 Then Bathsheba bowed with her face to the earth, and paid homage to the king, and said, "Let my lord King David live*

forever!" 32 ¶ And King David said, "Call to me Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada." So they came before the king. 33 The king also said to them, "Take with you the servants of your lord, and have Solomon my son ride on my own mule, and take him down to Gihon. 34 "There let Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet anoint him king over Israel; and blow the horn, and say, 'Long live King Solomon!' 35 "Then you shall come up after him, and he shall come and sit on my throne, and he shall be king in my place. For I have appointed him to be ruler over Israel and Judah."

Solomon himself and his kingdom of course foreshadowing Christ and His Millennial Kingdom - 1Ch 29:25 *So the LORD exalted Solomon exceedingly in the sight of all Israel, and bestowed on him such royal majesty as had not been on any king before him in Israel.....2Ch 1:1 ¶ Now Solomon the son of David was strengthened in his kingdom, and the LORD his God was with him and exalted him exceedingly.*

Just as God had promised David in - 2Sa 7:12 *"When your days are fulfilled and you rest with your fathers, I will set up your seed after you, who will come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. 13 "He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. 14 "I will be his Father, and he shall be My son. If he commits iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men and with the blows of the sons of men. 15 "But My mercy shall not depart from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I removed from before you. 16 "And your house and your kingdom shall be established forever before you. Your throne shall be established forever."'" 17 According to all these words and according to all this vision, so Nathan spoke to David.*

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e). And so all the events that we see as Jesus enters Jerusalem following the raising of Lazarus within the context of the preceding 6 signs are fraught with Messianic significance from the prophetic scriptures and set the stage so to speak for the opportunity of Israel's national repentance, a repentance that must be led by the nation's religious leaders - Joh 11:47 *Then the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered a council and said, "What shall we do? For this Man works many signs. 48 "If we let Him alone like this, everyone will believe in Him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and nation."53*

Then, from that day on, they plotted to put Him to death.12:10 But the chief priests plotted to put Lazarus to death also, 11 because on account of him many of the Jews went away and believed in Jesus.

However, national repentance it seems was not on the minds of the religious leaders, but rather an increased determination to put Christ to death and in an escalation of that seen in the punishment given to the man blind from birth, they plotted to kill Lazarus as well.

f). There is though a fascinating pronouncement made by the high priest recorded between v48 and v53 in John Chapter 11 in connection with this that is well worth looking at - Joh 11:49 *And one of them, Caiaphas, being high priest that year, said to them, "You know nothing at all, 50 "nor do you consider that it is expedient for us that one man should die for the people, and not that the whole nation should perish." 51 Now this he did not say on his own authority; but being high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus would die for the nation, 52 and not for that nation only, but also that He would gather together in one the children of God who were scattered abroad.*

The first thing we will want to note here is that Caiaphas 'did not say on his own authority', instead he prophesied, speaking the words that God had given to him. And the astounding thing that he says is that 'it is expedient for us [the Jewish people] that one man should die for the people, and not that the whole nation should perish'.

g). The implication being that Christ's death and subsequent resurrection is necessary so that the Jewish nation as a whole should not perish and this prophetic statement must take us beyond the time of the Lord's first advent to the on-going condition of the Jewish nation from that time forwards, encompassing those Jews who will go through the Tribulation. And this of course is exactly as it must be because the Passover Lamb must die and the blood must be appropriated before deliverance can take place, just as seen in Exodus which forms a type for this very thing. And this same thought of preserving the nation through putting to 'death' one man had also been prophetically set out in the type of Joseph and his brothers - Ge 45:5 *"But now, do not therefore be grieved or angry with yourselves because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life.*

Just as God sent Joseph into Egypt before his brothers to preserve the life of his family so God has sent His Son before the nation of Israel to preserve life, to preserve the nation, His family in that coming Day – exactly in accord with that prophetically pictured through Noah and the flood, through the burning bush in the wilderness and through Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-Nego in the fiery furnace heated 7 times hotter. And all is accomplished through Christ's death and resurrection – it is expedient for one man to die. And it is the nation as it will exist in the future day of the Tribulation as well as that present at the time of the Lord's first advent that Caiaphas refers to in John 11:52 *and not for that nation only, but also that He would gather together in one the children of God who were scattered abroad.*

h). That stated in this verse then must take us beyond the end of the Great Tribulation to the regathering of the nation from the lands where they will have been scattered, the regathering of a restored and healed nation, ironically pictured through the raising of Lazarus, the sign for which Jesus's death was to be sought, His death which ultimately, in conjunction with His resurrection would make all of this possible as the nation's Passover Lamb.

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3). And as we know repentance on behalf of the nation at the time written about in John's Gospel is not made leaving the Lord's death and His subsequent resurrection the only things left in view – Joh 12:3 *Then Mary took a pound of very costly oil of spikenard, anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped His feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the oil.....7 But Jesus said, "Let her alone; she has kept this for the day of My burial.*

Mt 16:21 ¶ *From that time Jesus began to show to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day.*

Lu 24:25 *Then He said to them, "O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! 26 "Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?"*

a). And it is the Lord's resurrection that forms the 8th and last sign recorded in John's Gospel – it would be a sign just as the Lord had said. *Joh 2:18 So the Jews answered and said to Him, "What sign do You show to us, since You do these things?" 19 Jesus answered and said to them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." 20 Then the Jews said, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?" 21 But He was speaking of the temple of His body.*

Mt 12:38 ¶ Then some of the scribes and Pharisees answered, saying, "Teacher, we want to see a sign from You." 39 But He answered and said to them, "An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. 40 "For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

b). The Lord's resurrection is the most significant event in world history and certainly the most significant event with respect to Israel's history. Had Jesus not risen from the dead we would not be here today in anticipation of His Kingdom - *1Pe 1:3 ¶ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, 5 who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.*

1Co 15:14 And if Christ is not risen, then our preaching is empty and your faith is also empty. 15 Yes, and we are found false witnesses of God, because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ, whom He did not raise up--if in fact the dead do not rise. 16 For if the dead do not rise, then Christ is not risen. 17 And if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins! 18 Then also those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. 19 If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable.

The good news is though - *1Co 15:20 ¶ But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.*

We shall look at the events surrounding the Lord's resurrection next time – if the Lord is willing.