

Signs of John's Gospel

Part 1

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[00:00:00] Simple Thoughts on the Eight Signs of John's Gospel. All signs are miracles, that is to say, supernatural exercises of divine power. Yet all miracles are not signs, that is to say, all signs convey some distinct teaching in addition to their display of power. The first sign is given in John 2, verses 1 to 10, turning the water into wine. Our Lord was there at the wedding feast at Cana as an invited guest. His act of turning the water into wine signified that he must supersede any human host. He manifested his divine glory there, demonstrating that he was the host for Israel. He will bring in the joy of the kingdom in the [00:01:04] coming day of marital festivity, but only after the water pots have been filled up with the water of purification. And of course, applied, the purifying fountain shall follow the great tribulation. See Zechariah chapters 12 and 13. Then Jehovah shall be called husband by his people, and shall no more be called master. Then shall the joy of the vineyards be the portion of Israel, when the door of hope is opened to her, culminating in the betrothal with all its attendant blessedness. See Hosea 2, verses 14 to 23. Thus shall the Lord be host and husband to Israel in the coming day of his manifestation. All this and much more is signified by this first [00:02:08] sign. May we who belong not to Israel, but to the new flock, the heavenly family of God, learn this from the sign that the gracious, lowly stranger, who came unto his own and was not received by them, who was unknown in the world his own hands had made, is none other than the Lord of glory. Praise his name. The invited man at Cana's feast, a humble guest did dine, yet God, the host, the water blessed and changed it into wine. The second sign is recorded in [00:03:01] chapter 4, verses 46 to 54. Here in Galilee, our Lord exercised his healing power amongst the poor of the flock. In the midst of an Israel which, like the nobleman's son, was almost at the point of death, he came in with a ministry of wonderful grace and power, which would have met the whole deep need. And so, if you look at Matthew 4, verses 14 to 16, there's a quotation given us from Isaiah chapter 9, verses 1 to 2. We read that, leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea coast, in the borders of Zabulon and Naphtalem. But it might [00:04:06] be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying, The land of Zabulon and the land of Naphtalem, by the way of the sea beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles. The people which sat in darkness saw great light, and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death, light is sprung up. And so here, in this remarkable incident, in the fourth chapter of John, the Lord Jesus Christ exercised his wonderful power in the healing of the nobleman's son. Our blessed Lord showed to a people who would not believe except they saw, that he was none other than Jehovah [00:05:07] Rapha. I am the Lord that healeth thee. See, for instance, Exodus chapter 15, verse 26. The healing mercy, which shall yet be experienced by his people in the coming day of his glorious power, was present when he trod his lowly, gracious pathway. As we elsewhere read, the power of the Lord was present to heal them all. And here the nobleman's son was healed. The wonderful thing is that the nobleman, affected by the testimony of the lowly Jesus, believed his word. And when he [00:06:04] inquired eventually as to the time of the healing of his son,

he recognized and acknowledged it was at the moment that the Lord sent him on his way, with a blessed assurance that his cry for help was heard. And what the Lord Jesus was then, as we've said, he'll be for the nation in the coming day. What they'll experience in his exercise of power in the day of his kingdom glory, was presented in lowliness, meekness, and grace in the day of his humiliation here. How sad that generally he was refused. Although, as we've said, citing Exodus 15, 26, he himself was the Lord that healed his [00:07:03] people. Jehovah Raphi. The third sign in John 5 verses 1 to 9, shows that our Lord carried in his own blessed person all that was signified by Bethesda, the house of mercy. It is significant that the man's infirmity was of 38 years duration. Israel, after 38 years wilderness wandering, were coming very near to their inheritance. Of course, before they could leave the wilderness and enter the land, there must be the experiencing of the judgment of God upon all that was contrary to him in them. And so this period of 38 years in their history nationally, seems to coincide with the [00:08:05] incident of the brazen serpent. Compare Numbers 21 verse 4 to 16 with Deuteronomy 2 verse 14. As in the flesh, and on the ground of law-keeping, Israel will never get into the divinely promised inheritance. Here in John 5, the man at the pool was absolutely helpless. He had no man, but the mercy of God drew near to him as it had to Israel. In the man Christ Jesus, in his act of healing, he manifested himself as the Lord of the new covenant. For we elsewhere read, see Hosea chapter 6 verse 6 and Matthew 9 verse 13, I will have mercy. So the God of the house of mercy was there in all his charm and [00:09:11] grace and power in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, exercising in Israel, then in mercy, what he soon will exercise for them in power. The fourth sign in John 6 verses 5 to 14 shows our Lord feeding the multitude. In so doing, he declared plainly that he is the Jehovah of Psalm 132, of whom it is written, verse 15 of that Psalm, I will abundantly bless her provision. I will satisfy her poor with bread. This is quoted from the Psalm which looks on to that day when Jehovah [00:10:02] shall come into his rest. How great the blessing which shall ensue for Israel when the Lord gets his rightful place. Then in consequence, brethren, the Lord's earthly people shall dwell together in unity under the effective administration of the anointed priest. Then they shall enjoy life for the millennial age under their Messiah. There shall be a spontaneous uprising of blessing Godward with resultant blessing manward. Read the last three Psalms of the grace together and then just say to yourself, the person who will bring all this about is that blessed adorable one who fed the poor with bread in the day of the sixth of John. The fifth sign is also in John 6 [00:11:12] verses 15 to 21. Jesus walked upon the sea and just as he came to his disciples in that day in the midst of the storm, so will he come to his own in the coming darkness and strong wind of the tribulation day. He'll bring that storm to an end as he brought the storm on the sea to an end by his glorious coming and shall bring his own to their desired heaven. He is the master of the seas and the winds and the waves are under his control. He it is who said in the 38th of Job verse 11, hitherto shall thou come but no further and here shall thy proud waves be stayed. [00:12:09] He'll bring the storm of tribulation and the fury of gentile hatred under the beast and the false prophet to a sudden end. Such is suggested here in the fifth sign of the gospel of John. The dependent man, the mount ascends and suppliant there is he, the mighty God. He then descends and walks the heaving sea.

Let us remember in all our consideration of these wonderful signs that though we may learn much of dispensational significance through them, that in them all we discern the glory [00:13:03] of our blessed Lord. Chapter 9 verses 1 to 7 gives us the sixth sign of the gospel. The great theme of the earlier chapters has been the testimony to men. Here in this chapter, the prominent thought is the work of God in man. Thus we have had the word of God to man, to man. Now it is a matter of the work of God in man. If Israel is to be delivered from the darkness and blindness of their ignorance of God, a divine work is essential. This is the significance of this sixth sign. The down stooping of the Son of God into this world in the lowliness of his incarnation symbolized in his making clear with his spittle

only intensified the blindness of the Jews. If they were waiting for the coming Christ, [00:14:05] it was not the humbled Christ they looked for. They looked for a mighty delivering warrior. The only hope for Israel was in being obedient to the sent one of God. Thank God the day shall surely dawn when their hearts shall turn to the Lord. They will repent then of their arrogant pretensions to knowledge. They shall no longer boast that they say. They will own their sin, their ignorance, and their darkness, and he will open their blind eyes. The veil shall be taken from their hearts and they shall gladly confess in the words of Isaiah 25 verse 9. Lo, this is our God. We have waited for him and he will save us. This is the Lord. We have waited for him. We will be glad and rejoice in his salvation. [00:15:07] Then too, as in Isaiah 33 verse 17, thine eyes shall see the king and his beauty. What a change shall be effected in contrast to the day of their national blindness when they said there is no beauty that we should desire him. Isaiah 53 and then in Isaiah 35 verse 5 we read then the eyes of the blind shall be opened. Then the day of judicial blindness shall be ended. In their unbelief they refused the Lord when he presented himself in grace. And so according to the end of this ninth chapter of John they were given over to blindness and shall be until the day of his coming in power and great glory. See also Isaiah 6 and John 12 verses 37 to 41. A set forth in this sign he is the only one who can lighten their darkness [00:16:11] and he shall yet open their eyes. He is the light giver. The seventh sign John 11 verses 1 to 44 is that of the resurrecting glory of the Son of God. What he did for Lazarus historically he shall yet do for the nation sleeping among the gentile nations. According to Daniel 12 verse 2 when the great tribulation has run its appointed course there shall be a national awakening awakening sunk to everlasting life. In Ezekiel 37 we read of the valley which was full of bones. As you go down those verses they're called dry bones. The question is raised can these bones live? [00:17:04] Verse 12 behold all my people I will open your graves and bring you into the land of Israel and you shall know that I am the Lord when I have opened your graves. Oh my people and brought you up out of your graves and shall put my spirit in you and you shall live. Please read the whole of that wonderful chapter. The power of the Lord shall be exalted for the resurrection of his people Israel. The major part of whom have long been lost among the nations and thus are nationally dead. The Lord will manifest his glory in bringing this about such is the portent of this sign. So the Lord Jesus said in John 11 verse 4 as to Lazarus that sickness is not unto death but for the glory of God that the Son of God may be glorified thereby. In verse 40 of that chapter said I not unto thee but if thou wouldest believe thou shouldest see [00:18:08] the glory of God. The great hope of Israel shall be realized for them by the resurrecting power of the Son of God. Arise and shine thy light has come. Israel one day shall hear the welcome word shall then come forth from out their darkened tomb to stand before the glory of their Lord. Times of the Gentiles then give way beneath the righteous scepter sway of him who out of Zion comes to bring deliverance to all Israel's sons. Dry bones shall live a nation in a day be born when neath the banner of Jehovah's love they dwell in safety and in lasting peace and hay amidst their swelling shouts of praise. Now a brief glance at the eighth sign of the gospel [00:19:06] 21 verses 1 to 14. The third time in which our Lord showed himself to the disciples after that he was risen from the dead. The disciples the true remnant of Israel which during the night of his absence had caught nothing in their fishing get their instructions from their risen Lord and cast their net at his behest. They were not able to draw it in for the multitude of fishers 153 great fishers under the command of their Lord they were eminently successful and the net did not break. Perhaps this suggests the service they will yet perform in casting the net of the gospel of the kingdom into the sea of the nations when they'll reap the harvest of the seas metaphorically the result and millennial blessing will be that the Gentiles shall come to Israel's [00:20:04] light. Isaiah chapter 60 I will gather all nations and tongues and they shall come and say my glory I will set a sign among them I will send those that escape of them to the nations but have not heard my fame neither have seen my glory they shall declare my glory among the Gentiles. Isaiah 66 verse 19 thus at the end as at the beginning of these signs which we have briefly glanced at and as to which we've made these very

very simple suggestions not dogmatic statements the paramount feature is the manifestation of the divine glory of our blessed Lord amen. In John 6 30 in regard to the query what sign [00:21:01] surest thou our blessed Lord spoke of himself as the bread from heaven and in this connection he indicated there was the sign of his coming down his incarnation then later he said the bread which I will give as my flesh which I will give for the life of the world this is the teaching of his death made plain from what follows so here are two distinct signs connected with the thought of himself as the bread of God the bread of life the bread from heaven his incarnation and his death in chapter 2 18 answering the Jews who said what sign surest thou and so on Jesus answered destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up and we read that he spoke of the temple of his body [00:22:03] referring to his coming resurrection after he was risen his disciples remembered he'd said this to them here then is the great sign of his resurrection in chapter 11 he said I am the resurrection and the life it was after he was risen and it appeared twice to his assembled disciples with a special appeal to Thomas that we read these words and many other signs did Jesus in the presence of his disciples and as to these that are written they are written that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ the son of God and believing you might have life through his name John 20 verses 30 and 31