

## THE BASIS OF THE SECOND COMING (Part One)

In Exodus 20:18-19, after the giving of the Decalogue on Mount Sinah in the wilderness it reads:

*Now all the people witnessed the thunderings, the lightning flashes, the sound of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking; and when the people saw it, they trembled and stood afar off. 19 Then they said to Moses, "You speak with us, and we will hear; but let not God speak with us, lest we die."*

GOD's ultimate response to this pleading of Israel is found in Deuteronomy 18:17-19: *And the LORD said to me: What they have spoken is good. 18 I will raise up for them a Prophet like you from among their brethren, and will put My words in His mouth, and He shall speak to them all that I command Him. 19 And it shall be that whoever will not hear My words, which He speaks in My name, I will require it of him.*

In the fullness of time, G-D answered Israel's prayer in the Person of Yeshua, His Son, THE JEWISH GOD MAN KING. *This particular messianic prophecy was the topic of our study last month, in which we saw how Yeshua was truly A Prophet Like Moses, in that He received DIRECT REVELATION from God.*

Yeshua fulfilled His first office, the office of Prophet, A PROPHET LIKE MOSES, the office in which He functioned during His First Coming. Because of the absolute accuracy of His near term prophecies, we can have great confidence that the distant events He also prophesied of such as **the Tribulation, His Second Coming, and His Messianic Kingdom** will also come true.

Today in part one of our study, we'll look at what occurred when the Messiahship of Yeshua was rejected. *This context must be examined, before we can begin to fully understand the TWO-FOLD PREREQUISITE which makes up The Basis of His Second Coming.* The Jewish prophets tell us that a certain specific condition must be met before the Messiah will ever return to establish His Kingdom.

In the layout of the Gospel of Matthew, Yeshua began His ministry in chapter 4. *From chapter 4 until chapter 12, Yeshua traversed Eretz Israel, city to city and synagogue to synagogue, proclaiming His Messiahship and preaching the gospel of the Kingdom.*

He was offering to Israel the Kingdom of the Jewish prophets, but the Kingdom was preconditioned by Israel's acceptance of Him as the Messianic King. He performed many miracles, and the purpose of all His miracles between chapters 4 and 12 was to authenticate His Person (that He is the Messiah) and His message (the gospel of the Kingdom).

These miracles were to serve as signs to the nation of Israel to force them to come to a decision about Him. Then in Matthew 12, the whole purpose of His miracles and His ministry underwent a radical change due to the rejection of His Messiahship (Matthew 12:22-37).

Among the many miracles Yeshua preformed was the casting out of demons. According to verse 27, Judaism also had exorcists. *In Jewish exorcism, one first had to establish communication with the demon in order to find out his name.* Then using that demon's name, the exorcist could cast him out.

Yeshua Himself used this Jewish method in Luke 8:30. When demons speak, they use the vocal cords of the person under their control. However, in the case of the dumb demon, *Jewish exorcism did not work because it is not possible to communicate with a demon who does not speak.* However, Jewish theology taught that the Messiah, when He came, **would** be able to cast out even that kind of demon.

In Matthew 12:22, Yeshua exorcises exactly that kind of demon:

*Then was brought unto him one possessed with a demon, blind and dumb: and he healed him, insomuch that the dumb man spoke and saw.*

The people were stunned by this demonstration of authority and asked the big question in verse 23:

*And all the multitudes were amazed, and said, **Can this be the son of David?***

Is this not the Jewish Messiah? After all, Yeshua was doing the very things they had been taught from childhood that **only** the Messiah would be able to do. They never asked this question when He casts out other types of demons. This was one of the key purposes of this miracle, to get them to see that He indeed was the **Son of David** (a Messianic Title referring back to the Davidic Covenant found in II Samuel 7:11b-16 and I Chronicles 17:14).

Throughout Jewish history, the populace has labored under what might be called the "leadership complex." Kinda' like **Mary Had A Little Lamb**, whichever way the leaders went, the people were sure to go. Consistently throughout the OT, when the king did that which was right in the eyes of the Lord, the people followed. When the king did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, the people followed.

Even today, when Jewish believers witness to their Jewish friends, a consistent objection is heard: *If Jesus really is the Messiah, then why is it that our rabbis do not believe in Him?* In NT times, **Pharisaism** exerted a stranglehold upon the masses, and this leadership complex was extremely pervasive.

SO, while the people are willing to raise the question, *Is this not the Messiah?* they were not willing to make that decision for themselves. Instead, they looked to their leadership to make that decision for them.

In effect, the people were holding the Pharisees "feet to the fire" by demanding a response. If Yeshua was not the Messiah, then they must offer some kind of alternative explanation as to how He was able to perform this miracle, a unique messianic miracle that they were taught ONLY the Messiah could do.

Ever since the performance of His first messianic miracle, *The Healing of the Leper* (Matthew 8:2-4, Mark 1:40-45, Luke 5:12-16), Yeshua had been under intense investigation by the Sanhedrin. *Now they were forced to make a final public pronouncement concerning the validity of His Messiahship.* Either HE WAS, or HE WAS NOT the Messiah. The people were asking... Hey, what the call here? Option 1, or 2?

Earlier on in His ministry, in the **Sermon on the Mount** (Matthew 5:1-8:1, Luke 6:17-49) Yeshua had repudiated **Mishnaic Pharisaism** on two counts: **First**, as a proper interpretation of the righteousness which the Law of Moses demanded; and **second**, as the kind of righteousness necessary for entering the Kingdom.

Because Yeshua did not accept their authority, because He was teaching things which contradicted their interpretation, because He did not fit the pharisaic mold or idea of what the Messiah was supposed to say and do, the Pharisees took the second option and chose to reject Yeshua in verse 24: *But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, This man does not cast out demons, but by **Beelzebub the prince of the demons.***

In order to explain His ability to perform these special miracles, they claimed that Yeshua Himself was possessed or demonized *not by some common demon but by Beelzebub the prince of demons.* The name **Ba'al-Zibbul** is a combination of two Hebrew words which combine to mean "the lord of the flies" (or by extension, connoting "lord of the dung heap," or "lord of diseases").

The Sanhedrin's response to Yeshua's first messianic miracle was investigation, but now their response to this second messianic miracle was the rejection of His messianic claims. This then became the official basis of the Pharisaic rejection of the Messiahship of Yeshua: they said He was not the Messiah on the grounds of being demon possessed.

This lie is the leaven of the Pharisees; the false teaching about which the Messiah would warn His disciples in Luke 12:1. *They were to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees: their claim that Yeshua was not the Messiah, rather, He was demon possessed.* This action by the leadership of Israel set the stage for Jewish history for the next two thousand years.

The Messiah's response is recorded in verses 25-29:

*And knowing their thoughts he said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand: 26 and if Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself; how then shall his kingdom stand? 27 And if I by Beelzebub cast out demons, by whom do your sons cast them out? therefore shall they be your judges. 28 **But if I by the Spirit of God cast out demons, then is the kingdom of God come upon you.** 29 Or how can one enter into the house of the strong man, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man? and then he will spoil his house.*

Very simply, but powerfully, the Messiah responded to this accusation by pointing out the obvious fallacy of their assertion... if their ILLOGICAL RATIONALIZATION was true, it would mean that Satan's own kingdom was divided against itself.

Yeshua then pronounced a judgment on the generation of that day in verses 30-37:

*He that is not with me is against me, and he that gathers not with me scatters. 31 Therefore I say unto you, Every sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; but the blasphemy against the Spirit shall not be forgiven. 32 And whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him; **but whosoever shall speak against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, nor in that which is to come.** 33 Either make the tree good, and its fruit good; or make the tree corrupt, and its fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by its fruit. 34 Ye offspring of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. 35 The good man out of his good treasure brings forth good things: and the evil man out of his evil treasure brings forth evil things. 36 And I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. 37 For by your words you shall be justified, and by your words you shall be condemned.*

In verse 31, that generation had committed the unpardonable sin: blasphemy of the Holy Spirit. It is vital to comprehend exactly what the blasphemy of the Holy Spirit is in the context in which it is found, and this is the *ONLY* context in which this sin is found and must be interpreted accordingly. The unpardonable sin was not an individual sin, but a national sin. It was committed by THAT GENERATION of Israel in Yeshua's day and cannot be applied to subsequent Jewish generations.

The CONTENT of the unpardonable sin was the national rejection of the Messiahship of Yeshua while He was physically present on the grounds that He was demon possessed.

This sin was unpardonable, and judgment was set. Unpardonable means exactly that, once Yeshua pronounced it, it was IRREVOCABLE. *The judgment came forty years later in A.D. 70 with the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple and the worldwide dispersion of the Jewish people.* This does not mean that individual members of that generation could not be saved, for many were.

It is not a sin that can be committed by individuals today (I John 1:9, what about Hebrew 6:6?). *It was a national sin committed by the generation of Yeshua's day, and for that generation the sin was unpardonable.*

From this point on, a special emphasis is placed on THIS GENERATION in the Gospels, for it was guilty of a UNIQUE (Definition: one of a kind, without equal. Grammarians: *paradigmatic absolute term which cannot be modified by an adverb of degree, e.g. there is no very unique*) SIN.

The Pharisees were nonplussed, stunned by this pronouncement of judgment. *They tried to retake the offensive by demanding a sign, as if Yeshua had done nothing so far to substantiate His Messiahship! Verse 38: Then certain of the scribes and Pharisees answered him, saying, Teacher, we would see a sign from you.*

But in verse 39-40, there was a change of policy regarding His signs: *But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign; and there shall no sign be given it but the sign of Jonah the prophet: 40 for as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the whale; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.*

From now on, there would be no more signs for the nation EXCEPT ONE. *While Yeshua would continue to perform miracles even after this event, the purpose of His miracles had changed. No longer were they for the purpose of authenticating His Person and His message in order to get the nation to come to a decision. That decision had now been made, and made irrevocably. Rather, His miracles would be for the purpose of training the Twelve Apostles for the new kind of ministry that they would need to conduct as the result of His rejection. It is the ministry the Apostles performed in the Book of Acts.*

For that generation there would be NO SIGN BUT ONE: THE SIGN OF JONAH, which is the sign of resurrection. It is a sign that would come for Israel on three separate occasions. *The first of these three is at the resurrection of Lazarus which we will discuss shortly.*

In verses 41-45, Yeshua concludes with more words of judgment for that generation. Note how often the phrase **this generation** appears: *The men of Nineveh shall stand up in the judgment with THIS GENERATION, and shall condemn it: for they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and behold, a greater than Jonah is here. 42 The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with THIS GENERATION, and shall condemn it: for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and behold, a greater than Solomon is here.*

*43 But the unclean spirit, when he is gone out of the man, passes through waterless places, seeking rest, and finds it not. 44 Then he says, I will return into my house whence I came out; and when he is come, he finds it empty, swept, and garnished. 45 Then goes he, and takes with himself seven other spirits more evil than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man becomes worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto THIS EVIL GENERATION.*

In verse 41, He compared them with Nineveh and explained why Nineveh will stand in judgment of that generation. The same is true with the Queen of Sheba (v. 42). *The people in both cases were Gentiles. With much less revelation to go on, they responded even without miracles. But that generation did not.*

Then, in verses 43-45, the words of judgment conclude with a story about a demon to illustrate what the final outcome of that generation would be. *Yeshua related the account of a demon who left on his own volition a man that he had possessed.*

When the demon was unable to find a new body to indwell and control, he returned to his original abode. Although he found it *swept, and garnished*, he also found it still *empty*. *The individual never took the opportunity to fill his life with the Holy Spirit. Nor had another demon entered him. So the demon re-entered the man he originally possessed* and then invited seven other demons to join him. *The outcome was that the last state of that man was worse than the first.*

The point of this story is often missed. Yeshua closed the story with the point that what was true of the man was also true of that particular *evil generation*. When that generation began, it began with the preaching of John the Baptist. *Matthew 3:1-3: In those days, Yochanan the immerger came, preaching in the wilderness of Yehudah, saying, 2 "Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand!" 3 For this is he who was spoken of by Yesha`yahu the prophet, saying, "The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make ready the way of the Lord, Make his paths straight."*

John's ministry prepared the people for the reception of the Messiah. *By means of his preaching, that generation was swept, and garnished.* But now that the Messiah had come, they rejected Him on the basis of demon possession. The nation that was swept and garnished now remained empty on account of the rejection of the Messiahship of Yeshua. *And because it remained empty, the last state of that generation was to be worse than the first.*

When that generation began, it was under Roman domination. NEVERTHELESS, it had a national entity. **It had a semi-autonomous form of government in the Sanhedrin.** *Jerusalem stood in all its Herodian glory, and the religious worship system in the Temple remained intact.*

But later, as a result of the rejection and the judgment in the year A.D. 70, the national entity of Israel ceased to exist. In the place of bondage, they were dispersed by the Roman armies. *The Temple, the center of Judaism, was completely destroyed so that not one stone stood upon another.* Eventually, the Jews were dispersed all over the world. So, indeed, the last state of that generation became worse than the first. *They went from bondage to worldwide dispersion.*

Even after the events in Matthew 12, the Pharisees approached the Messiah demanding a sign to authenticate His Person and His message (READ Matthew 16:1-4). In each case, He refused to give them any more signs but promised them only the sign of Jonah, *which is the sign of resurrection.*

**The First Sign of Jonah (John 11:1-44):** The resurrection of Lazarus is the presentation of the first sign of Jonah. The Messiah had raised others from the dead, yet all of the other resurrections are covered in just a **few** verses. But here John uses FORTY FOUR verses to give great detail about the resurrection of Lazarus.

**WHY? This is the sign of Jonah that Yeshua had promised.**

In verse 42, He made it very clear for whom Lazarus was raised, namely, the Jewish multitudes: *And I knew that you heard me always: but because of the multitude that stands around I said it, that they may believe that you did send me.*

Then, we see the response of the Jews in verses 45-46:

*Many therefore of the Jews, who came to Mary and beheld that which he did, believed on him. 46 But some of them went away to the Pharisees, and told them the things which Jesus had done.*

**The Sanhedrin's Verdict: John 11:47-50 and 53:** Some of the people responded correctly to this first sign of Jonah and believed that Yeshua was who He claimed to be. But others still wanted some kind of word or judgment from their leaders, and so they reported to the Pharisees what He had done. Since this was the sign Yeshua had promised them, they responded to the challenge in verses 47-50 and 53: *The chief priests therefore and the Pharisees gathered a council, and said, What do we? for this man does many signs. 48 If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him: and the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation. 49 But a certain one of them, Caiaphas, being high priest that year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all, 50 nor do you take account that it is expedient for you that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not. ...53 So from that day forth they took counsel that they might put him to death.*

The Pharisees responded in keeping with their original verdict of Matthew 12. *The Sanhedrin gathered together to make a decision as to how to respond to the sign of Jonah given in the resurrection of Lazarus. They issued a decree of rejection and sought an opportunity to put Him to death. The rejection of Yeshua's Messiahship was now complete. Going beyond the rejection of His Messiahship, they now condemned Him to death.*

Verses 54-57 give the results of the Sanhedrin's verdict. **First:** the Messiah went into hiding for a short period of time, because the hour of His death was not yet come (v. 54). **Second:** the people still raised questions concerning His Person, a logical thing for them to have done in light of the resurrection of Lazarus (v. 54). **Third:** the Sanhedrin's verdict filtered down to the masses in verse 57: *Now the chief priests and the Pharisees had given commandment, that, if any man knew where he was, he should show it, that they might take him.*

They sought an opportunity to put Him to death. *The rejection that had occurred in Matthew 12 culminated in John 11 with a decree of death hanging over the Person of Yeshua. The first sign of Jonah, the resurrection of Lazarus, was rejected.*

**The Denouncement of the Pharisees in Matthew 23:1-36:** is another passage of Scripture dealing with the judgment of that generation. *This entire chapter is devoted to a denunciation and condemnation of the Scribes and the Pharisees, the leadership of Israel, for various sins. In verses 1-12, they are condemned for their hypocrisy.*

In verses 13-14, they are condemned for leading the nation in the rejection of Yeshua's Messiahship. In verse 15, they are condemned for corrupting the proselytes. In verses 16-22, they are condemned for making the Mosaic Law ineffectual through pharisaic traditions. In verses 23-24, they are condemned for majoring in the minors. In verses 25-28, they are condemned for being concerned with externals only. And in verses 29-36, they are condemned for rejecting the prophets.

There are two key sections in this condemnation that we need to focus on. The first is Matthew 23:13: *But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because you shut the kingdom of heaven against men: for you enter not in yourselves, neither suffer you them that are entering in to enter.*

The Pharisees are held accountable not only for their rejection of the Messiahship of Yeshua, but also for leading the entire nation to the rejection of the Messiahship of Yeshua as well. This is a **very** important factor to note for later understanding of what the basis of the Second Coming of the Messiah will be.

The second key passage is Matthew 23:29-36: *Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for you build the sepulchres of the prophets, and garnish the tombs of the righteous, 30 and say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we should not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets. 31 Wherefore you witness to yourselves, that you are sons of them that slew the prophets. 32 Fill you up then the measure of your fathers. 33 You serpents, you offspring of vipers, how shall ye escape the judgment of hell? 34 Therefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: some of them shall you kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute from city to city: 35 that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed on the earth, **from the blood of Abel the righteous unto the blood of Zachariah son of Barachiah, whom you slew between the sanctuary and the altar. 36 Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon THIS GENERATION.***

These verses emphasize the severity of the judgment on that generation. *The judgment is primarily upon the leaders, but it is also upon the nation whom the leaders led in the rejection of His Messiahship.* Yeshua stated that they were not only to be held accountable for the rejection of His Messiahship, they were also to be held accountable for the blood of ALL THE PROPHETS of the Old Testament.

In the Jewish order of the books of the OT, which is what Yeshua used, *the first book is Genesis, where Abel is mentioned. The last book is II Chronicles, where Zechariah is mentioned.* Yeshua declared that they were guilty of all the blood from Genesis to II Chronicles, much as today we would say, "from Genesis to Revelation."

So that generation was guilty of the blood of all the prophets. **Does that seem harsh?** *The reason was that everything God intended to say concerning the Messiah had already been said by the Jewish prophets. That generation possessed in their hands the complete TaNaK, the entire OT canon. Furthermore, they had the preaching of John the Baptist announcing the soon coming of the Lord.*

Finally, they had the physical manifestation and presence of Yeshua the Messiah, who came with all the authenticating signs. Nevertheless, they rejected His Messiahship, following the example of their leaders. *For this reason they would be held accountable for the blood of all the prophets who spoke about the Messiah. This is something UNIQUE for that generation, as declared in verse 36: Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon THIS GENERATION.* It is the judgment of the unpardonable sin.

## CONCLUSION

The bottom line is this: the Messiahship of Yeshua was rejected by the Jewish leadership and they led the nation to the rejection of His Messiahship on the basis of demon possession. For that generation there would be no sign but one: **the sign of Jonah**, which is the sign of resurrection. It is a sign that would come for Israel on THREE OCCASIONS:

First, at the resurrection of Lazarus, which we discussed. Second, at Yeshua's own resurrection, which we'll discuss briefly next time. These first two signs were rejected by the nation.

But let us end on a Rabbinic Uptick: The third sign of Jonah will be accepted, *for the resurrection of the Two Witnesses\* will lead to the salvation of the Jews of Jerusalem!* The stage is now set for **Part Two** of our study on **The Basis of the Second Coming.** (\* Revelation 11:3, Zechariah 4:11-14)

**SHALOM!**