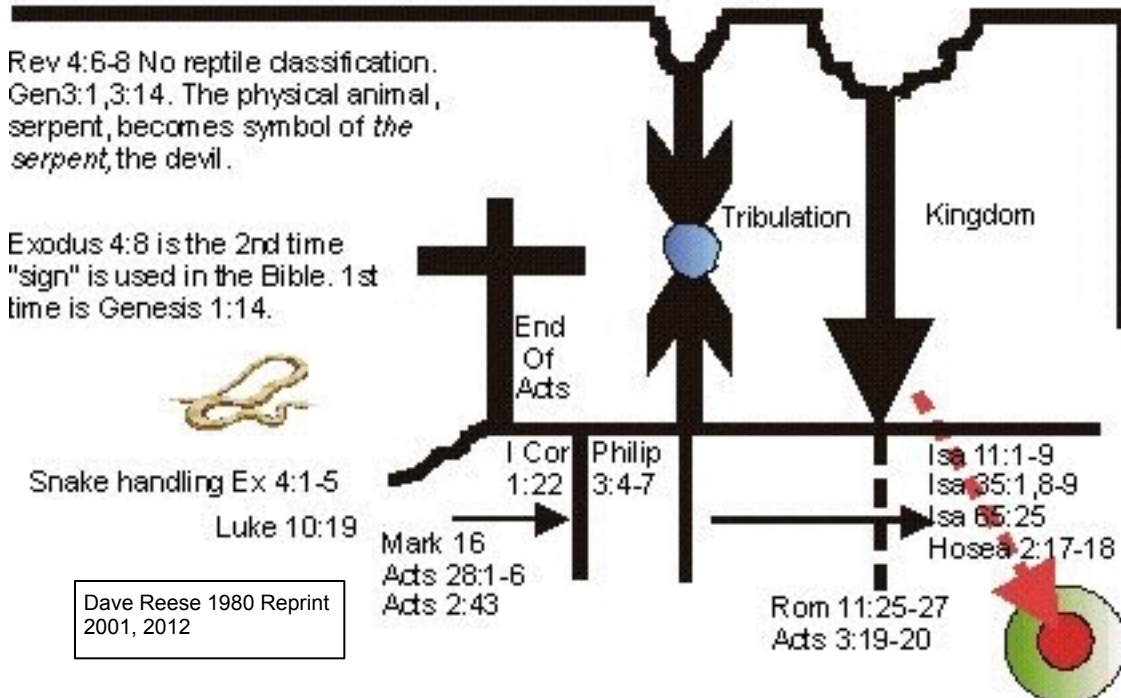


MARK 16: SIGNS OF THE KINGDOM

The first time "signs" are mentioned in the Bible is in Genesis 1:14 in connection with the Sun, moon and stars. This is a universal method God uses in certain ages throughout the Bible to confirm His word. From Joshua's "long day" to the birth of Christ, and through the Book of the Revelation, these are used as signs in a special way to the nation of Israel.

Isaiah 8:18
I Cor 1:22

SIGNS (Snake handling)



The signs of the kingdom promised to Israel originated in Exodus. These signs are evidence of domination over the physical and spiritual realms of the world system. During the kingdom, Israel enjoys physical and spiritual deliverance from sickness and devil oppression.

Signs and wonders in themselves are *not* necessarily proof of God's blessings. The signs must be interpreted by the context of God's word. Satan can and does deceive by signs.

7 For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way.

8 And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming:

9 Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders,

10 And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.

11 And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie:

12 That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness. (II Thessalonians 2:7-12)

The devil imitates everything that is good and from God. The only real proof of anything spiritual or physical is its contextual usage and definition in the Bible. Many people are deceived in churches today by so-called “tongues” “healing” and other signs. Since these are supernatural (in most cases they are simply emotional excess and psychological exercises), the assumption is that it must be from God. Nothing could be farther from the truth. “The mystery of iniquity doth already work” and many have fallen into the error.

When God delivers Israel from Egyptian bondage in Exodus, He does it with mighty signs which are harbingers of things to come for Israel. Signs of healing, tongues, taking up serpents, raising the dead¹, drinking deadly things, as given by God, are always for the benefit of Israel and prophecy the blessings they will enjoy when the Abrahamic Covenant is realized.

We now look at Exodus 3:6-ff.

6 Moreover he said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God.

7 And the LORD said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows;

8 And I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey; unto the place of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites.

The connection to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob refers to the Abrahamic Covenant, which dominates the history of Israel. The Bible student should not read any further until he has read the section dealing with the Abrahamic Covenant. Without this basic truth of God’s promise to Israel, the Bible, including most of the Old Testament and many portions of the New Testament will be a mystery. In this covenant God promised Abraham’s posterity a land with national and universal blessings (Gen.12:1-3) and repeated it to Isaac and Jacob

9 Now therefore, behold, the cry of the children of Israel is come unto me: and I have also seen the oppression wherewith the Egyptians oppress them.

10 Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt.

11 And Moses said unto God, Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?

12 And he said, Certainly I will be with thee; and this shall be a token unto thee, that I have sent thee: When thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt, ye shall serve God upon this mountain.

13 And Moses said unto God, Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What is his name? what shall I say unto them?

14 And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.

15 And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: this is my name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations.

¹ No modern faith healer does this but the Antichrist will in Rev.13:3. Today, this is the “stopper” on fakes like Ernest Angley, Benny Hinn, Richard Roberts, and snake handlers, etc. When the Antichrist appears, he will do the greatest signs of all, causing the world to fall at his feet.

16 Go, and gather the elders of Israel together, and say unto them, The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, appeared unto me, saying, I have surely visited you, and seen that which is done to you in Egypt:

17 And I have said, I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt unto the land of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, unto a land flowing with milk and honey.

18 And they shall hearken to thy voice: and thou shalt come, thou and the elders of Israel, unto the king of Egypt, and ye shall say unto him, The LORD God of the Hebrews hath met with us: and now let us go, we beseech thee, three days' journey into the wilderness, that we may sacrifice to the LORD our God.

Had Moses believed God, much confusion through the ages would have been avoided. God said, “they (Israel) shall hearken to thy voice” but Moses did not believe God’s word. If we do not believe what God says—get ready for second class travel.

19 And I am sure that the king of Egypt will not let you go, no, not by a mighty hand.

20 And I will stretch out my hand, and smite Egypt with all my wonders which I will do in the midst thereof: and after that he will let you go. (Exodus 3:6-20)

Notice in the passage that it is for sure Pharaoh would not let them go just because of a few signs of *blessing directed to Israel*. The sign and wonders given to Pharaoh were to *smite*, not bless. There are two different sets of signs in Exodus: One for Israel and one for Pharaoh, one to lead to blessing and one to lead to damnation. Tongues, healing, etc. were never given for the Gentile’s benefit; they were strictly for Israel and for blessing. Pharaoh’s signs were to smite and force him to let Israel go.

Look at Exodus 4.

1 And Moses answered and said, But, behold, they will not believe me, nor hearken unto my voice: for they will say, The LORD hath not appeared unto thee.

The “they” of verse one is Israel. Read the context. God just said “they shall hearken” (Ex 3:18), Moses said, “they will not” (Ex.4:1). When we insist on muddying the water, God issues something to stir it up.

2 And the LORD said unto him, What is that in thine hand? And he said, A rod.

3 And he said, Cast it on the ground. And he cast it on the ground, and it became a serpent; and Moses fled from before it.

4 And the LORD said unto Moses, Put forth thine hand, and take it by the tail. And he put forth his hand, and caught it, and it became a rod in his hand:

5 That they may believe that the LORD God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath appeared unto thee.

Here we have the first “snake handler” in the Bible. Notice that the snake becomes a rod. There is no “holy dancing” around a church pulpit, kissing the snake, singing to it, caressing it and acting like a snake charmer in India. God even gives Moses a little grace here by telling him to take it by the tail instead of the head. In the kingdom little children will play at the entrance of their den (Isaiah 11:8-9).

You won’t find the average tongues speaker in today’s charismatic churches handling snakes. You would have to issue a carload of “Depends” at every service. The city slicker TV evangelist charismatic is selective on his signs. To see the snake handlers you have to go to the hills of north Alabama or eastern Kentucky where: the ol’ boys drive 25 year old pickups, their wives wear dresses

made out of flour sacks, Sears Roebuck catalogs are modern conveniences in the outhouses, and when the front porch falls in, it crushes 8 dogs underneath. Of course they haul the snake handlers off to the hospital or graveyard in fairly regular fashion. (The author was born in north Alabama and knows whereof he speaks.)

6 And the LORD said furthermore unto him, Put now thine hand into thy bosom. And he put his hand into his bosom: and when he took it out, behold, his hand was leprous as snow.

7 And he said, Put thine hand into thy bosom again. And he put his hand into his bosom again; and plucked it out of his bosom, and, behold, it was turned again as his other flesh.

Here is the first healing in the Bible. No guesswork here and no “gradual” healing either. Leprosy is a blood related, flesh eating disease. Moses did not have a mild case of tendinitis, he had rotting flesh. And, in the same place he got the leprosy (his bosom), he got healed. Here God deals with what you drink. Let some faith healer pull this off!

8 And it shall come to pass, if they will not believe thee, neither hearken to the voice of the first sign, that they will believe the voice of the latter sign.

9 And it shall come to pass, if they will not believe also these two signs, neither hearken unto thy voice, that thou shalt take of the water of the river, and pour it upon the dry land: and the water which thou takest out of the river shall become blood upon the dry land.

10 And Moses said unto the LORD, O my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant: but I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue.

11 And the LORD said unto him, Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? have not I the LORD?

12 Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say.

13 And he said, O my Lord, send, I pray thee, by the hand of him whom thou wilt send.

14 And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Moses, and he said, Is not Aaron the Levite thy brother? I know that he can speak well. And also, behold, he cometh forth to meet thee: and when he seeth thee, he will be glad in his heart.

15 And thou shalt speak unto him, and put words in his mouth: and I will be with thy mouth, and with his mouth, and will teach you what ye shall do.

16 And he shall be thy spokesman unto the people: and he shall be, even he shall be to thee instead of a mouth, and thou shalt be to him instead of God.

17 And thou shalt take this rod in thine hand, wherewith thou shalt do signs.

(Exodus 4:1-17)

So the signs to Israel in Exodus get off “to a roaring start.” Because of Moses’ lack of faith, Israel must have the signs of handling snakes, healing, control over water, and language ability in order to be convinced Moses is God’s man. Other developments take place later.

According to Isaiah 8:13-18, the prophecy states the Lord will have disciples amidst unbelieving Israel with signs. Along with the signs, they will speak according “to the law and to the testimony.” If they have signs without the context of God’s word, it is because there “is no light in them.” Signs alone mean nothing but the fact that you are dealing with “familiar spirits.” (Old friends of the family)

13 Sanctify the LORD of hosts himself; and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread.

14 And he shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel, for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

15 And many among them shall stumble, and fall, and be broken, and be snared, and be taken.

16 Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples.

17 And I will wait upon the LORD, that hideth his face from the house of Jacob, and I will look for him.

18 Behold, I and the children whom the LORD hath given me are for signs and for wonders in Israel from the LORD of hosts, which dwelleth in mount Zion.

19 And when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep, and that mutter: should not a people seek unto their God? for the living to the dead?

20 To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them. (Isaiah 8:13-18)

At His first coming, the Lord Jesus Christ came to "his own" people, Israel, and His "own received Him not" (John 1:12). He gave the Kingdom signs to Israel but they crucified Him. Afterwards, He gave them another opportunity to receive Him through the 12 Apostles in Acts 1-7. The 12 were also given signs to confirm the message. Israel rejected them and the Kingdom on earth was in abeyance, along with the signs until the present Church Age is completed. For details on the present Church Age, the absence of Kingdom signs and the resumption of God's dealings with Israel, see other studies on this subject on the website. Or, you may send related questions to the addresses below.

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