

A TRUE PROPHET TO THIS GENERATION?

Every sincere Christian knows that the hour is desperately late, and that soon our beloved Lord Jesus will meet His Bride in the air (1 Thes. 4:16-17). What most people don't know is that even as John the Baptist forerun the first coming of our Lord, there must come a prophet, having the spirit of Elijah who will forerun Christ's second coming. Of course, even now there are many false prophets in the world, leading many astray (Mt. 24:11-24). But the same God who said there would be false prophets in this age also said there would come a true prophet.

"Behold, I will send unto you Elijah the Prophet"

In Malachi 4, which speaks of the end of the world, God said, *"Behold, I will send you Elijah the Prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord: And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to the fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse."* (Mal 4:5,6). This verse, having a compound meaning, is referring to two separate comings of Elijah. The angel said concerning John the Baptist: (Lk. 1:17) *"And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias* (note: Elias is the Greek word for Elijah) *to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children"*. John was to fulfil only this portion of Malachi 4:6; for the angel goes on, *"and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."* The angel said nothing about John turning "the heart of the children to their fathers", because that part of Mal. 4:6 didn't pertain to him.

"This was Elias, which was for to come"

Now, Jesus said that John the Baptist was Elijah, (Mt. 11:13-14), *"For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. And if ye will receive it, this is Elias, which was for to come."* But turn to John 1:19-21: *"And this is the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who art thou? And he confessed, and denied not; but confessed, I am not the Christ. And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elias? And he answered, No."* This appears odd. Jesus said that John was Elijah, but John himself said that he wasn't.

Does the Bible contradict itself? Not at all. Remember the Jews in that day were expecting the Messiah to appear in great power to destroy the oppressing Romans, and set the nation of Israel up as the rulers of the world. They were expecting an Elijah to forerun a Messiah who would come in power. John said, "No, I'm not that Elijah," for he was not sent "before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord." *"Then said they unto him, Who art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself? He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord."* (John 1:22-23) John, knowing well who he was, applied Isaiah 40:3 to himself.

"Elijah shall come and restore all things"

Christ Himself split Mal. 4:5,6 into the two comings of Elijah. Although He had told His disciples plainly that John the Baptist was Elijah (Matt. 11), sometime later (Matt. 17) they were still confused. *"And his disciples asked him, saying, Why then say the scribes that Elias must first come? And Jesus answered and said unto them, Elias truly shall first come, and restore all things. But I say unto you that Elias is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him, whatsoever they listed ... Then the disciples understood that he spake unto them of John the Baptist."* (Matt. 17:10-13). Examine verse 11 closely, where Jesus says, *"Elias truly shall first come,* (note: future tense - this Elijah had not yet come) *and restore all things."*

Now, did John the Baptist restore all things? John *prepared a people* for our precious Lord's appearance (Luke 1:17), but he didn't restore all things. However Jesus said there would come an Elijah in the future who would restore all things. Read Acts 3:19-21, where Peter talks about Jesus Christ, *"whom the heavens must receive until the times of restitution* (restoration) *of all things."* So the Lord whom we love must remain in heaven until all things are restored; and Jesus himself said Elijah would restore all things. Does 1+1=2? Thus this Elijah's ministry is absolutely vital.

In Matt. 24:37-39 Jesus said, *"But as the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be."* How was it in the days of Noah? The people were in gross blindness concerning the Word of God, which caused them to act wickedly. God sent one man, a prophet, with a message, "Come into the ark and be saved!" God said that if he didn't send Elijah in these last days, the Truth would be so watered down and messed up until He would have to "smite the earth with a curse." This Elijah's message will be, "Come into Christ and be saved!" Remember, Christ is the Word. (John 1:1,14, 1 John 5:7).

"He shall turn the children to their fathers"

The Word of God has been twisted and perverted and the original Truth lost down through the ages until today there are more than 900 denominations in the world, all claiming to have the correct interpretation of the Word. But God promised that the Truth would be restored. This in fact, is what Mal. 4:6 is saying. The angel said John would "turn the hearts of the fathers to the children." By studying what John later did we can see that he turned the hearts of the orthodox Jewish fathers to the new faith in Jesus Christ, for Christ's followers at John's time were but spiritual children. Those children grew spiritually and became the apostolic fathers whom God used to build His church, and to write the New Testament. But the churches today have strayed from that original foundation (Eph 2:19-20), to their organizational ideas and man-made theologies, until the Truth lies hidden from our eyes, smothered by vain philosophies and multitudes of opinions. This end-time Elijah will "turn the heart of the children to their fathers", that is: he will turn our hearts, the children of the end-time, back to the faith of our apostolic fathers, until our faith, lives, and doctrine match theirs perfectly.

The 7 Church Ages

Briefly we will sketch the ministry of this Elijah through the Book of Revelation. In Chapters 2 and 3 Jesus Christ is dictating 7 letters to 7 Gentile churches in Asia Minor. If you note the listed conditions of each of these churches, then study church history, you will discover that each letter was a prophecy, for the letters in sequence correspond exactly to the six ages the Gentile church has gone through. Today we are in the 7th or Laodicean church age (Rev 3:14-22). Notice that each church age has an *angel*. (Rev. 1:16, 20; 2:1,8,12,18; 3:1,7,14). The word angel literally means *messenger* (Greek *angelos*: *a messenger from God*), not always heavenly, (Gal. 4:14; Rev. 22:8,9). The same word (angel/messenger) is used of John in Luke 7:27.

Since these are earthly Gentile churches, these must also be earthly angels. So each church age had an angel, or messenger, the apostle Paul being the messenger to the first or Ephesian Age. (Rev. 2:1, Acts 9:15; 13:46-49, Rom. 11:13, 15:15-16; Gal. 1:11-12; 2:6-8; Eph. 3:1-8; 2 Tim. 1:11). Concerning the 7th church we read, *"And unto the angel* (messenger) *of the Church of the Laodiceans write"* (Rev. 3:14a). Jesus then severely denounces the rich, organizational systems of this age, saying that they are poor, blind, naked, and DON'T KNOW IT! In verse 20 we find Christ pushed out of His own church, making a call to the few individuals who hunger and thirst to go all the way with God. Since this 7th age is the last church age and since Elijah must restore all things before Jesus comes for His Bride, it follows that the man who will have the spirit of Elijah will also be the 7th church age messenger. He will be a prophet-messenger, even as John was both prophet and messenger. (Luke 7:24-27) Therefore Rev. 3:14-22 will be part of this Elijah's message, as the message given in Rev. 3:14-22 is addressed to *"the angel of the church of the Laodiceans"*.

Revelation 10:7

Now consider Rev. 10:7 - *"But in the days of the Voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets."* According to this verse, the 7th church age messenger will wrap up all the loose ends which have been lost in the battle for truth through the ages. He gathers up all that has been lost in the previous ages, and reveals them in the last day, thus *"finishing the mystery of God"* (at least to the extent that He has *"declared it to the prophets"*). This corresponds to what the *"man clothed in linen"* told Daniel; *"But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end."* (Dan. 12:4a,B-9). So that which was sealed and withheld from Daniel must be revealed in our day. God has only one method to reveal His mysteries; *"Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but he revealeth His secrets unto his servants the prophets"* (Amos 3:7). Some of the mysteries this Elijah will reveal are:

- *The mystery of the translation of the living saints at the end time* (1 Cor. 15:51)
- *The mystery of Godliness, even Christ, as the incarnate Fullness of the Godhead embodied* (1 Tim 3:16)

- *The mystery of "Mystery Babylon, the mother of harlots"* (Rev. 17:5-7)
- *The mystery of the Serpent seed* (Gen. 3)
- *The mystery of water baptism* (Acts 2:38)

Are you beginning to see the necessity of receiving this end-time Elijah and his Message? Jesus said, "He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward." (Matt. 10:41a). And again, "He that receiveth whomsoever I send, receiveth ME", (John 13:20). How can a person say that they love Jesus, then reject a prophet whom Jesus Himself sends? You would be standing on shaky ground. Be careful, lest you have the same spirit as the religious Pharisees, who believed what God did IN THE PAST, but could not accept what God was doing RIGHT BEFORE THEIR EYES! They reviled the blind men whom Jesus had healed, saying, "Thou art his disciple; but we are Moses' disciples. We know that God spake unto Moses: as for this fellow, we know not from whence he is," (John 9:28-29). Jesus said of these hypocrites, "For had ye believed Moses, (really believed him) ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me," (John 5:46). Likewise, if we really believe Jesus Christ, we will believe His end-time Elijah, for Jesus spoke of him. Christ also said to the Pharisees, "And ye have not His (the Father's) Word abiding in you: for whom He hath sent, him ye believe not," (John 5:38). Oh, Christians, let us believe that Elijah when we recognize him! Remember, everyone who rejected Noah's message perished in the flood. To reject God's prophet is to reject God, (1 Sam. 8:4-7; Ex. 18:2,8). Do not forget that a prophet is the sign of impending judgement (Noah, Jonah, Jeremiah etc.)

"Thou that stonest the prophets"

However, most people will reject this prophet-messenger. It's been that way in every age. Virtually no prophet was ever received by the majority of people in their day, (Matt. 5:11-12; Acts 7:51-52). Out of millions, only seven listened to Noah. The children of Israel continually murmured and rebelled against Moses; the people rejected Samuel; Elijah was so hated he thought he was the only one left who worshipped Jehovah; the people ridiculed and persecuted Jeremiah. Jesus said, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee" (Matt. 23:34-37). All the scriptures concerning this end-time Elijah will be fulfilled, yet so simply and humbly (as it has always been), that most will miss it. For example, read the spectacular prophecy about John the Baptist's ministry, (Isa. 40:4), then read in Matt. 3:1-12 how humbly it was fulfilled. So humbly until even the disciples themselves failed to recognise whom he was (Matt. 17:10).

Wolves in sheep's clothing

But how can we find this true prophet-Messenger, amidst the multitude of false prophets that swarm the earth today? Jesus said, "by their fruits ye shall know them," (Matt. 7:15-20). Not by their gifts and miracles, for many will do signs and wonders in the Name of Jesus Christ, and yet be workers of iniquity (Matt. 7:22-23; Mark 13:22, Deut. 13:1-3). Such prophets appear as wolves in

sheep's clothing (Matt. 7:15). Yet they will be WIDELY ACCEPTED MEN, LIKED, ADMIRER, AND WELL SPOKEN OF BY ALL! (Luke 6:26).

These false prophets will mislead many because much of what they speak will be true, yet all that many of them will be after is your money (2 Pet. 2:1-3). They will make people "trust in a lie" (Jer. 28:15) preaching peace to the people, whether their lives are lining up with the Word or not (Jer. 23:16-17; Jer. 6:14). False prophets will "Pervert the right ways of the Lord" and though they manifest acts of power, it will be nothing compared to God's true prophet, (Acts 13:6-12; Ex. 7:8-12). Yet, their ways will be extremely deceptive, (Jer. 23:9-32; Ezek. 13). These false prophets will appear and act so close to the real prophet, that only the elect will not be deceived, (Matt. 24:24; 2 Chronicles 18; Jeremiah 28).

"Thus saith the Lord"

But do not forget there is one final test. God said, "And if thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the word which the LORD hath not spoken? When a prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him" (Deut. 18:21-22). This then is how to tell a true prophet - what he prophesies in the Name of the Lord and will always come to pass, (see also Jer. 28:9).

This end-time Elijah will have "THUS SAITH THE LORD." When he says "THUS SAITH THE LORD" on doctrine, it will be perfectly in line with the scriptures. When he says, "THUS SAITH THE LORD" and prophesies, the thing will happen *exactly* as said. If it ever fails to be perfect, just once, then he is not a genuine prophet, for every prophet has "THUS SAITH GOD" and God's Word can't fail. A prophet's words spoken when under the anointing are not his own: they are God's words, (1 Peter 1:20-21).

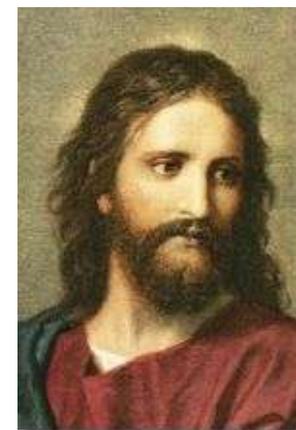
"Elias is come already"

Now consider what Jesus said concerning John the Baptist, "But I say unto you, that Elias is come already, and they KNEW HIM NOT, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed" (Matt. 17:12-13), Multitudes in Christ's day was earnestly expecting Elijah to appear, yet he came and went and THEY MISSED HIM! Likewise they were looking for the Messiah, yet He came and went and THEY MISSED HIM! Would it be any surprise if this end-time Elijah would come and go and the majority of people miss him? That ought to make us fall on our faces before God in fervent prayer, for we know the hour is late-our Lord's coming is nigh.

Of course, simply recognizing this prophet Messenger won't save anyone, for salvation comes only through faith in the shed blood of Jesus Christ. However, we must heed this Prophet's Message, for he will restore the PURE Word, free from all man-made creeds, doctrines, traditions, philosophies, programs and ideas.

The Bride of Christ must be so much like Him, she will be saying the same thing He says, (Rev. 22:17a). She must have "the mind of Christ," even as did the Bride in the Ephesian church age (1 Cor.2:16). Paul said, "Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it: that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water BY THE WORD (and this end-time Elijah will restore the PURE WORD for the Bride) that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing (creeds, traditions) but that it should be holy and without blemish," (Eph. 5:25-27). Through this Elijah's message we will know exactly what does and what doesn't please our Lord Jesus. We will be restored!

One more thought. John the Baptist prepared a people for the Lord, even as the angel said he would. But did he prepare everyone? Though many heard him, there were but a few who really perceived his MESSAGE and were prepared for the Lord. Likewise this end-time Elijah will "restore all things", but not for everybody. There will be relatively few who heed his MESSAGE, come into the fullness of Christ and are really ready for the Rapture. Few? "Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and FEW there be that find it," (Matt. 7:13-14; also Luke 13:23-24; 1 Cor. 9:24). "For many are called, but FEW are chosen," (Matt. 20:16; 22:14). Eight were saved in Noah's day; three saved in the days of Lot. Jesus said both of these were types of His Second Coming, (Luke 17:26-30).



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