

SPIRIT & POWER OF ELIJAH

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Unless Otherwise stated Scripture quotes are from the NLT

INTRODUCTION:

Anyone with a honest and sincere heart towards the Lord and His Word understands that the Christian Church in Canada is in great need of Revival. Where is the dramatic transformation of life style that accompanied early church salvations. Where are these disciples "**disciplined followers**" of the Lord Jesus Christ? Where is the passion to avoid sinning at all costs?

THE PURPOSE:

The purpose for us considering the "Elijah Ministry" is to learn from the Scriptures about this vital and unique ministry that preceded the first coming of Christ. In so doing, we will learn what we can expect to be happening in the days that precede the "Second Coming of Christ".

Faith comes to us through hearing the Word of God, (Rom.10:17). For us to be praying effective prophetic prayers we must first hear from God and then be praying in agreement with that Word. When Elijah prayed he brought down rain from heaven. This wasn't just the result of some GOOD IDEA. It wasn't a question of trying to some how second guess God and be left wondering, "Now is this really what God wants or not?"

In order to pray like Elijah we need to FIRST know the heart and mind of our God. God told Elijah it was going to rain before he even began praying about it, (1 K.18:1). Elijah was able the Pray in FAITH because he had received the Word of from God.

With the Word of God as our foundation our faith rises and we will be found praying in faith in our generation and the result will be God's perfect will being done. That means REVIVAL, RIGHTEOUSNESS, and SALVATION OF SOULS.

PREACHING RIGHTEOUSNESS:

As it was in the days of Noah so it will be in the days of the coming of Christ. A lot can be said about Noah's time, however, what we want to notice is that prior to the judgment of God, Noah preached righteousness (2 P.2: 5). The word was preached. Righteousness. Can't you hear him saying, "look folks, the hour is late, the need is great? It's time to get right with God. It's time to turn from sin and serve the Lord. You can almost see in the Noah the forerunner of the Elijah spirit.

"**Righteousness goes as a herald before him, preparing the way for his steps.**," (Ps.85:13). This is exactly what happened through the Elijah spirit that was upon John the Baptist. The spirit of Elijah precedes the coming of Christ. It preceded Christ's first coming and it will also precede His Second Coming. The message heralded by the two prophets in the book of the Revelation is, Come out of her, my people, so that you will not share in her sins, (Rev. 18:4).

Right now God is beginning to release the spirit of Elijah upon the church. It will call sin for what it really is! SIN. It will pull no punches. It will look for the evidence of genuine repentance and seek to prepare a people ready for the Second Coming of Christ. Count on it! We're going to be experiencing more and more preaching of the Word-- turning people from sin to serving God who a whole heart. his will be ministry very similar to that of John the Baptist.

- * There will be very clear lines of distinction drawn between right and wrong.
- * There will be a very clear call for God's people to separate themselves from worldly ways and to live wholly surrendered and submitted lives to Jesus.
- * There will be a clear call to holiness that comes from the Holy Spirit filled life.
- * There will be call to lift up our spiritual eyes to heaven where Jesus is seated at the right hand of the Father.
- * There will be a call focus upon the spiritual, eternal things of God and His Kingdom.
- * There will be a clear call to "get ready because Jesus is coming soon".

What a joy and delight this is going to be to us all

Mal.4:5,6 - "Look, I am sending you the prophet Elijah before the great and dreadful day of the LORD arrives. 6 His preaching will turn the hearts of parents to their children, and the hearts of children to their parents. Otherwise I will come and strike the land with a curse."

PRECEDES THE COMING OF CHRIST:

The "Elijah Ministry" preceded the "First Coming of Christ". The priest Zechariah, was told by an angel of the Lord that his wife Elizabeth would bare him a son that would be great in the sight of the Lord, he would be filled with the Holy Spirit from birth. John the Baptist would go on before the Lord in the spirit and power of Elijah (Luke 1:12-17).

Of John, Jesus said, "Among those born of a women there has not risen anyone greater than John the Baptist," (Mt. 11:11). We are told that this, greatest of prophets, "never performed a miraculous sign," (Jn.10:41). Usually when one thinks of a prophet it's directly connected with prophesying or the "for telling" of future events yet there's no mention of any such prophecy during this prophets incredible ministry, he did however tell of Christ's immediate appearing.

What made him so great in the eyes of God? It's very evident that the people of John's day believed him to be a prophet of God, (Mt.14:5). Even Herod, who eventually had John beheaded, knew him to be a righteous and a holy man, (Mk. 6:20).

BUILDING THE ALTAR OF SACRIFICE:

The first really noticeable thing unique to Elijah is the rebuilding of the altar upon which he would place the animal sacrifice. Clearly this altar had not been in use for some time and needed to be completely rebuilt. It was here that the fire from heaven came and burned up the sacrifice and as a result of this manifestation of God's power and presence Israel turned back to the LORD.

There can be little question that modern western Christianity needs to address the issue of personal, self-sacrifice. We have come through such a materially prosperous time in the west that even the promise of greater material blessing has been used in an attempt to lure people into the kingdom of God. In our attempts to be appear successful we have totally avoided some of the very basics of the original Gospel. Things like counting the cost

before deciding to be a disciple (disciplined follower) of the Lord Jesus. Even, true calls to repent, of sin is often not mentioned in, so called evangelistic meeting in order to avoid turning people off or offending them.

Under the guise of "friendship evangelism" we dare not even mention thing like, your decision to follow Jesus Christ could cost you your job or that former friends will most likely choose not to have anything more to do with you! This kind of deceptive approach to Gospel is totally foreign to the "Elijah Ministry". There will be a "no none sense", "no apology" approach to preaching and evangelism. The trust will be place on the fire of God rather than on human manipulation.

The fact is that certain charismatic personalities using proven methods will result in successful business, even church! We may use these humanistic approaches disguised in various forms of spiritual garb to build our church kingdoms but rest assured we are not going to build God's kingdom with anything other than the power of God.

For to be truly successful in the kingdom of God and successful in the eyes of God we will be required to sacrifice much more than a lot. We will be required to sacrifice ALL. We will be required to be totally crucified to this world, totally committed to Jesus and fully ready to lay down our lives for the cause of Christ!

The "Elijah Ministry" is an "ALL or NONE" approach to life with Jesus. There can no longer be two masters to serve! **1K. 18:21 - Then Elijah stood in front of them and said, "How long are you going to waver between two opinions? If the LORD is God, follow him! But if Baal is God, then follow him!"** Riding the fence with one foot in the light while the other is in the darkness will no longer be tolerated. Serving God on Sundays and the world the rest of the week is going to have to come to and end. And it will come to an end for many who will choose to listen to what the Spirit is saying to the Church in the days just preceding the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. There will be a people prepared and ready for Jesus return. There will be many who choose to get on the Highway of Holiness the Road of Righteousness.

Mt 6:24 - "No one can serve two masters. For you will hate one and love the other, or be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.

URNS PEOPLE BACK TO GOD:

The Elijah spirit was expressed through the life and ministry of John the Baptist. There's a number of very interesting things about the "spirit of Elijah" and John the Baptist's ministry that help us understand a lot of what God will be doing in the earth just prior to the Second Coming of Christ.

The spirit of Elijah precedes the coming of the Lord and is the ministry that prepares the people for that event. John was, "Prepare a pathway for the Lord's coming! Make a straight road for him!" (Lk.3:4). The angel told Zechariah that John would, **"be a man with the spirit and power of Elijah, the prophet of old. He will precede the coming of the Lord, preparing the people for his arrival. He will turn the hearts of the fathers to their children, and he will change disobedient minds to accept godly wisdom."**, (Lk. 1:17) **"And he will persuade many Israelites to turn to the Lord their God."** (Lk. 1:16). The major uniqueness of the Elijah Ministry is, "TURNING PEOPLE BACK TO GOD".

It's very interesting to note that the "Elijah Ministry" of John the Baptist was successful in its purpose of turning people back to the Lord. People were persuaded to turn from sin to obedience. The disobedient minds will accept godly wisdom. WISDOM is manifest through actions of obedience. By the fear of the Lord people depart from evil and it is also the beginning of WISDOM. It's wise to obey the Word of God and depart from sinning.

Mt.11:19 tells us that **"wisdom is proved right by her actions."** (NIV) Two good examples of this are the wise and foolish builders and the wise and foolish virgins (bridesmaids). In each case the action of wisdom is obedience to the Word of God. The Elijah Ministry is effective in turning people from disobedience to obedience.

MAKE READY A PEOPLE FOR THE LORD:

The result of the Elijah Ministry was that it effected hearts, changed attitudes, and changed lives! Lk.1: 16,17 - And he will persuade many Israelites to turn to the Lord their God. 17 He will be a man with the spirit and power of Elijah, the prophet of old. He will precede the coming of the Lord, **preparing the people for his arrival**. He will turn the hearts of the fathers to their children, and he will change disobedient minds to accept godly wisdom."

Isa. 40:3-10 - Listen! I hear the voice of someone shouting, "Make a highway for the LORD through the wilderness. Make a straight, smooth road through the desert for our God. 4 Fill the valleys and level the hills. Straighten out the curves and smooth off the rough spots. 5 **Then the glory of the LORD will be revealed, and all people will see it together**. The LORD has spoken!" 6 A voice said, "Shout!" I asked, "What should I shout?" "Shout that people are like the grass that dies away. Their beauty fades as quickly as the beauty of flowers in a field. 7 The grass withers, and the flowers fade beneath the breath of the LORD. And so it is with people. 8 The grass withers, and the flowers fade, but the word of our God stands forever." 9 ¶ Messenger of good news, shout to Zion from the mountaintops! Shout louder to Jerusalem-do not be afraid. Tell the towns of Judah, "**Your God is coming!**" 10 Yes, the Sovereign LORD is coming in all his glorious power. He will rule with awesome strength. See, he brings his reward with him as he comes.

The New Testament interprets the Old. This is without question the most accurate method of interpreting the prophetic Scripture. Jesus clearly told us that John the Baptist was the Elijah, which was to precede the coming of the Messiah. However He also said the Elijah was yet future. John the Baptist was the pre-fillment, and we should expect this same kind of ministry prior to Jesus' Second Coming.

In Isa.62 we find a little different concept about the "Highway". Isa. 40 views this Righteous Road from the perspective of being prepared for the Lord while Isa. 62 views it a Highway of Holiness for God's people to return to the Lord on.

Isa.62:10,11 - Go out! Prepare **the highway for my people to return!** Smooth out the road; pull out the boulders; raise a flag for all the nations to see. 11 **The LORD has sent this message to every land:** "Tell the people of Israel, 'Look, your Savior is coming. See, he brings his reward with him as he comes.'"

The context of the Isa. 62:10&11 is without question the "Second Coming". Jesus is pictured here bringing His rewards with Him! The "Highway" here is to be built for God's people to return on. The road is to be made smooth with the boulders removed. The intention must be for God's people not to yet tripped up with obstacles.

The other noticeable thing about this portion of Scripture is that the message is sent out to "every land". The First Coming of Jesus was to the nation of Israel, to the Jews. This message however is to the whole world.

As we bring Isa.40 & Isa 62 together we conclude that the meeting place for Jesus and His people will be on this "Highway of Holiness" This Righteous Road is where God's people will see and meet the Lord.

BRINGS RAIN FROM HEAVEN:

The Elijah spirit is one that brings rain from heaven, confronts idolatry and a religious spirit, and boldly stands up against the powers of darkness to have reaffirmed that Jehovah is the only true and living God.

In the days of Elijah, as the Jezebel spirit was having dominion, the true prophetic Word of the Lord was scarce. Jezebel had slain most of the prophets and there was a real dearth of the Word. This is how it was prior to John the Baptist. The true prophets weren't around for about 400 years. You talk about the Word being scarce! It was a spiritual desert in Israel.

It was the spirit of Elijah that brought the rain of heaven upon Israel (1 K. 18:42-45). What is this rain from heaven? What does it look like? Isa. 55:10,11 "As the RAIN and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater SO IS MY WORD that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it, (the ultimate reference here has to be the Word, "Jesus", who came to the earth from heaven and has returned and is presently accomplishing God's will in the earth, but that's another area to cover on it's own.) The point is-- The Word going forth from God's mouth is the RAIN from heaven and it accomplishes God's will.

Nt. A note worthy point regarding Elijah's prayer for rain: Before Elijah prayed he heard something in his spirit. He heard the sound of rain. 1K. 18: 41 - Then Elijah said to Ahab, "Go and enjoy a good meal! For I hear a mighty rainstorm coming!" He already knew what God was going to do. He had already heard the prophetic voice of God. His prayer would have been a "faith prayer". He wasn't in question as to what God's will was. He knew what he had heard and was now praying in agreement with what he had already heard from God. Those involved in Elijah Ministry will be those who have heard from the Lord and are praying and believing for the rain of God to fall and to produce in the hearts and lives of His people all that He purposes.

CONFRONTS SIN & PREACHES REPENTANCE:

As we are singing the "rain songs of renewal" we are inviting a major outpouring of God's Word. It should be clearly understood that this isn't a head- knowledge word that we need, that we have plenty of. It's a Word from God that is powerful enough to bring REPENTANCE. The spirit of Elijah is not to be confused with a spirit of prophecy, the forth telling of events, etc. It is a spirit that turns people back to God. It's somewhat confrontational and draws the line and gives the same call that Joshua gave, "who's side are you on?" Which side of the line are you walking on?

The spirit of Elijah has a way of confronting sin. What was it that cut John's head off? Wasn't it the fact that the spirit of Elijah confronted the sin of Herod and Herodias, (Mk. 6:17-28). They weren't living right in the sight of God. Their life-style was contrary to the Word of God.

The spirit of Elijah has a way of exposing the spirit of religion. "But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to where he was baptizing, he said to them: "You brood of viper! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? Produce fruit in keeping with repentance," (Mt. 3:7). He was calling for the real thin! He was pressing for more than a light heart, superficial, yes! The spirit of Elijah seeks deep repentance. It seeks to turn people from sin God. No wonder it's great in the eyes of the Lord.

Interestingly there's not one personal prophecy of John's that's recorded! Believe it or not, he never performed one miracle. That's right. Not one healing, not one person received physical sight or hearing. No lepers were cleanse, etc. The miracle, however, of great significance was that through the preaching of the Word people turned from sin to God. (Don't misunderstand me here. Miracles are important. Jesus did them. It's a part of New Covenant Church life and ministry). The point I'm making is: The greatest miracle of all is when people turn away from sin to love and serve God with all their heart. The spirit of Elijah is released for that purpose.

Suggested Prayer: Oh Father in Heaven give us hearts to receive your Word and the spiritual courage of Christ to lay down my life in obedience to you. Give me clear understanding of how you want me to live a disciplined "Jesus Life" right where I am. Help me to glory you through the actions of my daily living. May you be honored in all I say and do! I want to be ready for when Jesus comes! Thank you Father, in Jesus name! Amen!