



Truth For These Times



31. THE COMING OF ELIJAH THE PROPHET

In every stage of earth's history God has appointed messengers to lead His people in the way of truth and righteousness. Men such as Moses, Nehemiah, Isaiah, and Daniel were among those who stood firm for God and fearlessly proclaimed His messages. One of the most outstanding was the prophet Elijah whom God used to bring about the greatest revival Israel had seen up to that time.

Elijah is used as an illustration in prophecy to represent a message that would turn people to God and His truth in the last days.

Malachi 4:5, 6 Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD. And he will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers, lest I come and strike the earth with a curse.

Here is the promise that God would send Elijah the prophet for a special purpose, to turn the people back to God and bring in a Christian revival amongst His people. Notice the time period – “Before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD.” Or in other words, before the Second Coming of Christ.

Joel 2:31 The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the coming of the great and awesome day of the LORD.

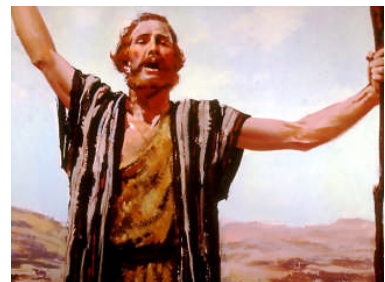
Before the second coming of Jesus there will be signs in the sun and moon. In the study of the Signs of Christ's Second Coming we have seen how these events have already occurred to usher in the prophetic period known as the *Time of the End*.

Matthew 24:29, 30 Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

After the period of the dark ages – days of tribulation – these signs in the heavens appeared. (Refer to study 5, Signs of Christ's Second Coming, for details.) The next great event is Christ's second coming. The coming of Elijah the prophet precedes the coming of Jesus to prepare a people for this great event. See also Luke 21:25-28, and Revelation 6:14-17.

WHO WAS ELIJAH?

The thrilling story of how God used Elijah to bring about a revival in Israel is found in 1 Kings chapters 17 and 18. He lived about 900 years before Christ at a time when Israel had apostatized and gone to worship Baal, the sun God. The king of Israel, Ahab had unlawfully married Jezebel, daughter of the king of Zidon and high priestess of Baal worship. Thus there was a compromise between God's truth and the pagan practises and beliefs of sun worship, leading the people to forsake the commandments of God.



After a drought which lasted 3 ½ years, Elijah challenged the king to put Baal to the test. On Mount Carmel a contest was arranged between the prophets of Baal and Elijah. With no human aid fire was to come down from heaven and consume the sacrifices that had been placed on the altar. The prophets of Baal tried all day without success. Then Elijah prayed to God and miraculously fire came from heaven and consumed the sacrifice, as well as the water poured over it, and even melted the rocks

of the altar. The people were convinced and recognised the God of heaven as the true God. There was a tremendous revival.

What then is the significance of Malachi's prediction concerning the return of Elijah? The work of Elijah was to prepare a people to meet their God. The Bible reveals a repetition of the work of Elijah on two different occasions. The first message was to prepare a people to meet Jesus when He first came to the earth. The second message of preparation is to make a people ready for His second coming.



John the Baptist was referred to as a type of Elijah by Jesus.

Matthew 17:10-13 And His disciples asked Him, saying, "Why then do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?" Jesus answered and said to them, "Indeed, Elijah is coming first and will restore all things. "But I say to you that Elijah has come already, and they did not know him but did to him whatever they wished. Likewise the Son of Man is also about to suffer at their hands." Then the disciples understood that He spoke to them of John the Baptist.

The coming of Elijah does not mean the prophet will appear in person, for Jesus clearly indicated this. John the Baptist proclaimed a message of preparation to make way for the first coming of Jesus.

Luke 1:17 He will also go before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.

John the Baptist was not Elijah in the flesh, but he was called Elijah because he did a similar work. Elijah called people to repentance – so did John the Baptist.

Matthew 11:10,11,14 For this is *he* of whom it is written: Behold, I send My messenger before Your face, who will prepare Your way before You. Assuredly, I say to you, among those born of women there has not risen one greater than John the Baptist; but he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he... "And if you are willing to receive *it*, he is Elijah who is to come."



The Children of Israel had forgotten God's Law and were worshipping other false gods.

Notice John is called a messenger. This is the important issue. It is not so much the person, but the message that really counts.

Malachi 4:5 Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD.

Let us take another look at this text. The message of Elijah is to be repeated again, before the great and dreadful day of the Lord, to prepare a people to meet Jesus. The Bible signs predict the soon return of Jesus to our world, therefore we must expect that the Elijah message is being proclaimed now. But how can we find the Elijah

message today? An investigation reveals a parallel between Elijah's day, and the message being presented at this time. First of all we will examine Elijah's message in his day.

1 Kings 16:30,31 Now Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the LORD, more than all who *were* before him. And it came to pass, as though it had been a trivial thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, that he took as wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal, king of the Sidonians; and he went and served Baal and worshiped him.

One big mistake king Ahab made was to marry a heathen woman. This was contrary to God's command. The second big mistake growing out of the first was Baal worship. Instead of worshipping the Creator, Israel began worshipping the sun, moon and stars. See 2 Kings 17:16.

James 5:17 Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain; and it did not rain on the land for three years and six months.

A tremendous drought came upon Israel, (1 Kings 17:1), which lasted 3 ½ years. After the drought Elijah appeared with a message. What was the nature of this message?

1 Kings 18:17,18 Then it happened, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said to him, “*Is that* you, O troubler of Israel?” And he answered, “I have not troubled Israel, but you and your father’s house *have*, in that you have forsaken the commandments of the LORD and have followed the Baals.



God sent a drought for 3 ½ years to show who sends the rain.

Elijah’s message called for a return to the commandments of God.

1 Kings 18:21 And Elijah came to all the people, and said, “How long will you falter between two opinions? If the LORD *is* God, follow Him; but if Baal, follow him.” But the people answered him not a word.

The message of Elijah called for decision. Then in 1 Kings 18:26-38 we see Elijah exposing false worship and positively proclaiming true worship. Before the miracle on Mount Carmel it seemed Elijah was alone: and even after the victorious event on the mount he felt alone again, but God revealed to him that there were 7,000 in Israel who had not bowed the knee to Baal (1 Kings 19:14,18). It seems a large number, but it was only a minority compared with those who rejected the message.

1 Kings 19:1-3 And Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, also how he had executed all the prophets with the sword. Then Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah, saying, “So let the gods do *to me*, and more also, if I do not make your life as the life of one of them by tomorrow about this time.” And when he saw *that*, he arose and ran for his life, and went to Beersheba, which *belongs* to Judah, and left his servant there.

Elijah’s life was threatened by the wicked Queen. Immediately he had proclaimed his message, persecution followed. Part of the message embraced warning of the judgment of God against the false system of worship. This is mentioned in 1 Kings 21:18,19,23. That judgment came to pass in the gory deaths of Ahab and Jezebel.

2 Kings 2:11 Then it happened, as they continued on and talked, that suddenly a chariot of fire *appeared* with horses of fire, and separated the two of them; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.



Queen Jezebel sought to kill Elijah for showing her religion to be false.

When Elijah’s work was completed he was translated without seeing death.

WHAT IS THE PARALLEL OF ELIJAH’S MESSAGE FOR TODAY?

In the early days of the Christian church after the death of the apostles, the church compromised its principles with paganism, just as Ahab compromised with Baal worship. Symbolically Christianity wed paganism. Sun worship entered the church in the form of heathen customs such as Easter, Christmas and Sunday sacredness. Then followed a spiritual drought of 3 ½ prophetic years or 1260 days.

Revelation 12:14, 6 But the woman was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness to her place, where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time, from the presence of the serpent...

Then the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, that they should feed her there one thousand two hundred and sixty days.

This is the period of Papal supremacy between A.D. 538 to A.D. 1798 (1260 years). For more details see the chart [1260 Years of Papal Supremacy](#) and the study on the [True Church](#). This was a time of spiritual drought for the word of God, paralleling the literal drought of 3 ½ years in Elijah’s day.



Paganism entered the Christian Church and the Law of God was once again forgotten.

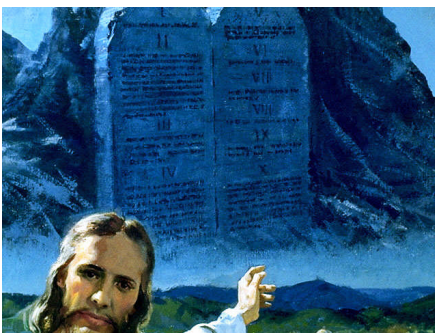
Revelation 14:6-14 The Three Angel’s Messages.

At the close of the 3 ½ years Elijah delivered his message. Likewise at the close of the 1260 days, the last warning message of the 3 angels of Revelation 14 began to be preached in the world. Just as Elijah called the people back to the commandments of God, so the 3 angel’s messages does the same and points to God’s people as commandment keepers (see verse 12). For more details see the study on the [Three Angel’s Messages](#).

Revelation 18:2-4 And he cried mightily with a loud voice, saying, “Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and has become a dwelling place of demons, a prison for every foul spirit, and a cage for every unclean and hated bird! For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich through the abundance of her luxury.” And I heard another voice from heaven saying, “Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues.”

Elijah’s message called for a decision, so does the last day message – a call to come out of the false system of worship and join those who keep the commandments of God and have the faith of Jesus. Also Elijah exposed false worship. In Revelation 14:8,9,10 the last day message does the same. In Elijah’s day only a minority accepted the message. Revelation 12:17 speaks of God’s remnant – only a small group – a minority. In Revelation 13:15-17 we see God’s people persecuted for proclaiming the message just as Elijah was persecuted for proclaim his. Then in Revelation 14:9,10 we read a warning of coming judgment against the false system of worship. Again this parallels Elijah’s day. The judgments were delivered then and they will certainly be proclaimed in the future. Finally, just as Elijah was translated, so 1 Thessalonians 4:16,17 says that the faithful living at the time of Christ’s Second Coming will be translated – caught up with Jesus.

Revelation 22:12 And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work.



The Elijah Message calls everyone to keep the commandments of God and worship the true God.

After the presentation of the message, Jesus comes to gather His faithful children and grant them the reward of everlasting life.

1 Kings 18:21 And Elijah came to all the people, and said, “How long will you falter between two opinions? If the LORD is God, follow Him; but if Baal, follow him.” But the people answered him not a word.

We cannot sit on the fence. We must take our stand on one side or the other. Choose you this day whom you will serve. To serve Jesus and accept His truth leads to life eternal.

God has raised the Seventh-day Adventist church in these last days to preach God’s last warning message to the world. The message of preparation for the Lord’s coming is being proclaimed with power. As a result, the faithful remnant are being gathered together – they keep the commandments of God and have the faith of Jesus. There is still time. Now is the time to accept the call of God. Tomorrow may be too late.

The Seventh-day Adventist church is not just another church. It is a movement raised by God at a special time to bear a special message to the world. A message of reform, a message to return to God's commandments. Soon this message will have gone to every nation, and then the end will come. The truth is soon to triumph gloriously, and all who now choose to be labourers together with God, will triumph with it. May God keep us faithful to our part and our place in the great work of the Elijah movement.

ELIJAH	ELIJAH MESSAGE
Ahab weds Jezebel	Church weds paganism
Sun worship in Israel	Sun worship enters church
3 ½ years drought	3 ½ – 1260 years of Papal supremacy A.D. 538 – 1798
Elijah appears with message	Elijah message
Crisis at Carmel	World religious crisis
Persecution	Persecution
Judgments on Jezebel	Judgments on beast worship
Elijah translated	Saints translated

Review Sheet – The Coming of Elijah The Prophet

ASSIGNMENT – Read the Bible study carefully before answering the following questions.

1. When did God say He would send Elijah the prophet? Malachi 4:5,6
Before the _____
_____. (ie. Before Second Coming)

2. Briefly, what type of message did Elijah give?
Answer _____

3. John the Baptist did a similar work to Elijah in revival and preparation for Jesus' first coming. How did Jesus reveal the work of John? Matthew 11:14
If you are willing to receive it _____

4. What was the spiritual condition of Israel in the days of Elijah? 1 Kings 18:17,18
In that you have _____
_____.

5. What challenge did Elijah give to Israel on Mt Carmel? 1 Kings 18:21 (decision)
If the _____
_____.

6. At a time of tremendous victory for God, what did Elijah do showing his faith had failed him? 1 Kings 19:1-3 (persecution)
And when he saw that _____.

7. When Elijah's work was completed, what happened to him? 2 Kings 2:11 (translation)
And Elijah _____.

8. The Elijah message being proclaimed today calls a people back to the commandments of God. It is a message of revival and preparation for Jesus second coming. What decision will God ask those in false systems of worship to make? Revelation 18:1-4
Saying, _____.

9. What will finally happen to God's faithful people at the Second Coming of Jesus? 1 Thessalonians 4:16,17
We who are alive and remain _____

(Elijah was translated – so are those who respond to the last day Elijah message)

10. What is the parallel to Ahab (king of Israel) marrying Jezebel (a heathen woman)?
Answer _____

11. What is the parallel of the 3 ½ year drought in Elijah's day? Revelation 12:14,6
Answer _____

12. What is the parallel of the great religious crisis on Mt Carmel? Revelation 18:1-4
Answer _____

(The final decision between true and false worship.)

Do you believe the Seventh-day Adventist Church is proclaiming the Elijah message of preparation for the Lord's Second Coming today? YES _____ NO _____