

The Spirit of Elijah and Justice in the End Times (Mal. 4:4-6)

I. THE MINISTRY OF ELIJAH IN THE END TIMES

- A. Malachi describes the end-time revival as characterized by Elijah's ministry. Elijah's message, will be confirmed by a manifestation of God's power with the spirit of prophecy in a way that parallels his historic ministry (1 Kgs. 17–2 Kgs. 2) and Malachi's prophecy (Mal. 4:4-6). Malachi added a key message: turning the hearts of fathers to children and of children to fathers.
- ⁴Remember the Law of Moses, My servant, which I commanded him in Horeb for all Israel...
⁵Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD. ⁶And 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. (Mal. 4:4-6)*
- B. **Remember the Law of Moses:** This was the standard way of calling people to obey God's Word. Elijah's message was that God's people repent and walk in full obedience to God (1 Kgs. 18:21).
- C. **Turn the hearts of fathers:** It is miraculous when powerful men turn their heart to give their resources to children who cannot give anything back to them that would increase their influence. The fatherless are those without a father in their life, not just orphans. God's power as seen in Elijah's ministry will **draw attention to** children as the focus of **God's** end-time justice **purposes**.
1. Turn the hearts of natural fathers to their natural families.
 2. Turn spiritual fathers (men and women) in the Church to mentor younger people.
 3. Turn the fathers in society (church, government, marketplace, etc.) to the fatherless.
- D. **Turn the hearts of the children:** Children will respond to love that is given by the fathers. This is the first generation in which children are influenced more outside their home than inside it.
1. Turn children to their natural fathers.
 2. Turn children to their spiritual fathers in the Church.
 3. Turn children to those in authority in society (governmental leaders, marketplace leaders, etc.)
The great lawlessness in society in the end times will be related to fatherlessness (Mt. 24:12).
 4. Turn children to the Jewish fathers such as Abraham, David, the prophets, and the apostles;
i.e., to those who wrote the Scripture, so that the children obey God and serve His purposes.
 5. Turn children to the fathers used by the Spirit through church history in the great revivals, etc.
- E. Much of the end-time harvest will come from the poor youth of the nations. Many will be those who are abused or orphaned in different ways such as God's judgments that will result in 1/3 of the earth dying (Rev. 9:15), genocide, natural disasters, plagues, AIDS, refugee camps, etc. John prophesied that human trafficking would be prominent in the end times (Rev. 18:13).
- ¹¹The merchants of the earth will weep...for no one buys their merchandise anymore:
¹²merchandise of gold and silver...¹³wheat, cattle and sheep...and bodies and souls of men.*

(Rev. 18:11-13)

- F. ***Before:*** The fullness of the prophecy about Elijah’s return and the global outpouring of the Spirit will come *just before* Jesus returns. This great outpouring is related to God’s heart for children. Joel described the end-time outpouring of the Spirit as coming *before* Jesus returns (Joel 2:31). An initial and partial fulfillment of this occurred in the generation of Jesus’ first coming.

²⁸I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy... ³⁰I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth: blood and fire and pillars of smoke...³¹before the coming of the great and awesome day of the Lord. (Joel 2:28-31)

- G. ***Lest I strike the earth with a curse:*** The response to Elijah’s ministry will determine the measure of blessing and/or judgment that will be released in various areas of the earth.

- H. God told Moses that He would judge anyone who afflicted widows or the fatherless. Those who need a Judge most are the fatherless who are abused in human trafficking or neglected in society. One reason judgment comes is to stop those who exploit widows and orphans (Mal. 3:5)

²²You shall not afflict any widow or fatherless child. ²³If you afflict them in any way, and they cry at all to Me, I will surely hear their cry; ²⁴and My wrath will become hot, and I will kill you with the sword; your wives shall be widows, and your children fatherless. (Ex. 22:22-24)

²Rise up, O Judge of the earth; render punishment to the proud...⁵They break in pieces Your people, O LORD, and afflict Your heritage. ⁶They slay the widow and the stranger, and murder the fatherless. ⁷Yet they say, “The LORD does not see...” ²⁰Shall the throne of iniquity, which devises evil by law, have fellowship with You? ²¹They gather together against the life of the righteous, and condemn innocent blood... (Ps. 94:2-21)

II. GOD’S HEART FOR CHILDREN

- A. Jesus revealed His heart for children and linked receiving or valuing children to receiving Him.

⁵Whoever receives one little child like this in My name receives Me. (Mt. 18:5)

¹³They brought young children to Him, that He might touch them; but the disciples rebuked those who brought them. ¹⁴But when Jesus saw it, He was greatly displeased and said, “Let the little children come to Me...do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom.” (Mk. 10:13-14)

- B. David prophesied that children’s worship would silence the enemy at the time when Jesus’ name is honored in all the nations (this will occur especially in the generation Jesus returns). Jesus connects His end-time global prayer movement to His purposes of reaching the fatherless. Jesus quoted a prophecy of David (Ps. 8:2) when He cleansed the temple at His first coming.

¹O LORD, our Lord, how excellent is Your name in all the earth...²Out of the mouth of babes and nursing infants You have ordained strength, because of Your enemies, that You may silence the enemy and the avenger. (Ps. 8:1-2)

¹⁵When the chief priests saw...the children crying out in the temple and saying, “Hosanna to the Son of David!” they were indignant... ¹⁶Jesus said to them, “Yes. Have you never read, ‘Out of the mouth of babes and nursing infants You have perfected praise?’” (Mt. 21:15-16)

- C. The largest orphan outreaches in history will be raised up by the Lord in the coming days. During a 40-day corporate fast in the summer of 2007, we cried out to see God’s glory. On July 30, I received a partial answer from the Lord to this fast. The Lord called us to ask for more grace to be involved in His purposes as declared in Malachi 4:5-6. I was stirred by the Lord to pray for help to establish a context in Kansas City to “house 10,000 children as a part of the IHOP-KC family” and to ask for wisdom to establish a model to care for and educate orphans.
- D. The ideal is to see that every child be trained on a musical instrument, be regularly in the house of prayer, and learn to flow in the prophetic spirit as Samuel did as a child (1 Sam. 3). We are asking the Lord to help orphanages to function as “prophetic singing seminaries.”
- E. We challenge every house of prayer to embrace God’s purpose for the fatherless. I believe God’s desire is that the end-time orphan movement be turned into an apostolic missions movement. After some orphans grow up, the Lord will send them back to the lands that abused them (like St. Patrick) to preach the gospel and build houses of prayer. God’s plan is to take the fatherless and make them fathers in the end-time church. Many of the end-time apostolic and prophetic leaders in the prayer and missions movement will come from the Lord’s purpose in reaching orphans.

III. GOD’S PROMISE TO SEND ELIJAH: A TWOFOLD FULFILLMENT

- A. Malachi spoke of a forerunner messenger who would prepare the way of Jesus’ second coming. This prophecy describes the situation in the end times when Jesus purifies Israel (Zech. 13:8-9). He named this messenger as Elijah (Mal. 4:5). John the Baptist partially fulfilled this prophecy.
¹Behold, I send My messenger, and he will prepare the way before Me. The Lord, whom you seek, will suddenly come to His temple, even the Messenger of the covenant [Jesus], in whom you delight...²Who can endure the day of His coming? Who can stand when He appears? For He is like a refiner’s fire...³He will purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer to the Lord offering in righteousness...⁵I will come near you for judgment; I will be a swift witness...against those who exploit wage earners and widows and orphans... (Mal. 3:1-5)
- B. Jesus spoke about Elijah coming to restore all things (at the time of His second coming). The spirit of Elijah operated in John the Baptist’s ministry as a partial fulfillment of Malachi 4:6.

¹¹Indeed, Elijah is coming first and will restore all things. ¹²But I say to you that Elijah has come already...¹³The disciples understood that He spoke...of John the Baptist. (Mt. 17:11-12)

- C. Jesus identified John the Baptist with Elijah (Mt. 11:10; 17:10-13); John denied that he was Elijah the Tishbite, yet claimed to be a voice preparing the way of the Lord (Jn. 1:19-23). Gabriel spoke to Zacharias about John partially fulfilling three promises related to end-time forerunners (Isa. 40:3-5, Mal. 3:1-5; 4:4-6). He said that John would prepare the way for Jesus (Mal. 3:1) and would operate in the spirit of Elijah to turn fathers to the children (Mal. 4:5-6).

¹⁷He [John the Baptist] will also go before Him [Mal. 3:1] in the spirit and power of Elijah [Mal. 4:5], “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. (Lk. 1:17)

IV. THE SPIRIT OF ELIJAH

- A. ***Historical Elijah:*** We understand the spirit of Elijah by understanding his message and power.
1. Elijah operated in God’s power with prophetic revelation.
 2. Elijah called the nation of Israel to righteousness by calling them to repentance.
 3. Elijah lived in the grace of fasting and prayer.
 4. Elijah was a celibate, having no natural children. However, he was a spiritual father.
 5. Elijah did not prepare people for the coming of the Messiah.
- B. ***End-time Elijah:*** He will go beyond the Elijah of the Old Testament in his power and message.
1. Elijah will operate in an unprecedented measure of God’s power with prophetic revelation.
 2. Elijah will call the nations to righteousness by calling them to repentance.
 3. Elijah will turn the hearts of fathers to the children and the children to the fathers.
 4. Elijah will prepare people for Jesus’ second coming.
- C. ***John the Baptist:*** John’s ministry partially defines the spirit, or purpose and message, of Elijah.
1. John turned people to righteousness, but did not do any miracles like Elijah did (Jn. 10:41).
 2. John prepared the people to receive the first coming of Jesus.
 3. John lived in the grace of fasting and prayer.
 4. John was a celibate without a natural family, but was a spiritual father to his disciples.
 5. We have no record that John turned the fathers in his generation to the children.
- D. ***End-time forerunners:*** God will raise up those who operate in the spirit and power of Elijah.
1. Forerunners will minister in God’s power with prophetic revelation.
 2. Forerunners will call others to repent and live in righteousness.
 3. Forerunners will live in the grace of fasting and prayer.
 4. Some will be celibates without natural families, but will be spiritual fathers (male and female).
 5. Forerunners will prepare people for Jesus’ coming as Bridegroom, King, and Judge.
 6. Forerunners will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children and the children to the fathers.
 7. Forerunners will call the children to turn to the Jewish fathers (teachings of the OT prophets).

- E. God is a creative thinker who “thinks outside the box.” Prophetic dreams allow us to receive part of His plan for this generation. To dream is to receive a vision for new possibilities. Each person’s gift or talent is part of the plan in God’s heart for them. God has a plan to do something great in this hour. He put you on the earth to be part of the miracle of His end-time church.
- F. It is estimated that 98% of people are *followers* of culture and only 2% are *shapers* of culture. Most are culture zombies, not culture shapers. They take their cues from the media and fashion industry. Most of the media is a dream killer, in which we just participate in someone’s dream.
- G. God is raising up fathers who will dream God’s dreams and then create a context for others to be helped by them. It is our inheritance to receive creative ideas from God. He will give new “outside the box” ideas on what to do in the marketplace, ministries, music, and much more. The devil works this way, giving “creative” ideas for evil, such as innovations in the porn industry.