

Who is the Elijah to Come?

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Who is the Elijah to Come?

There is in the church of God today a re-enforced belief that Herbert W. Armstrong was the Elijah to come. Cult leaders have taken over large segments of the Church of God, and some even say you cannot be baptized unless you believe HWA was the Elijah to come. Who is the Elijah to come? Is it HWA? Or does he still have to reveal himself to the world?

The prophecy of Jesus

Jesus Christ spoke of Elijah the prophet to come, he said, “And Jesus answered and said unto them, *Elias truly shall first come*, and restore all things.” (Matthew 17:11). Jesus said this just *after* the vision of the coming Kingdom of God; The famous transfiguration on the mount. Notice, “And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart,

“And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light.

“And, behold, there appeared unto them *Moses and Elias* talking with him.” (Matthew 17:1-3). Then Jesus told them, “Tell the vision to no man, until the Son of man be risen again from the dead.” (v.9).

The disciples after seeing that vision asked, “Why then say the scribes that Elias must first come?” (v.10). Jesus said, “*Elias truly shall first come*” The context is clearly into the future before the coming of the Messiah into his kingdom. At this time John the Baptist was dead. The Pulpit Commentary says, “Christ is here alluding to his own second coming, which shall be preceded by the appearance of Elijah in person. This seems to be the plain meaning of the prophecy in Malachi, and of Christ’s announcement... *That the paragraph cannot refer to John the Baptist is plain from the tenses used in this verse contrasted with those in the following. To regard verse 12 as simply a correction of verse 10 is to do violence to language, and to leave one half of Malachi’s prediction unexplained.* (emphasis added).

Jesus said of John, “But I say unto you, That Elias is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed. Likewise shall also the Son of man suffer of them. “Then the disciples understood that he spake unto them of John the Baptist.” (vv.12-13).

Jesus also said on another occasion, “And if ye will receive *it*, this is Elias, which was for to come.” (Matthew 11:14).

In the Gospel of Luke it describes that ministry of John as that of Elijah’s as well, “But the angel said unto him, Fear not, Zacharias: for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John.

“And thou shalt have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth.

“For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, *and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink*; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb.

“*And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God.*

“And he shall go before *him in the spirit and power of Elias*, 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.” (Luke 1:13-17). John came in the “spirit” and “power of Elijah,” “not his miraculous power, for John did no miracle” (John 10:41), but his power ‘turning the heart,’ or with like

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success in his ministry.” (JFB Commentary). So he was the Elijah to come, but that was for the first coming. Clearly by the evidence above and the prophecy of Malachi, there is also a second Elijah to come and prepare the way for the second coming as well!

Malachi writes, “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 their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.” (Malachi 4:5-6). Jesus said *after* the death of John, Elijah must come first and restore all things. Before his *second* coming there must be an Elijah to appear and prepare the way for Jesus. This is why John the Baptist denied being Elijah to come, “And they asked him, What then? Art thou *Elias*? And he saith, *I am not.*” (John 1:21). The scribes meant the Elijah who is to prepare the way for the Messiah to come into his kingdom. John said no he was not that Elijah whom they were seeking. Instead he fulfilled the prophecy of *Isaiah* who prophesied of “the voice of one crying in the wilderness, prepare ye the WAY OF THE LORD, make His paths straight” (Matthew 3:3). The Jews and the priests were waiting for the conquering Messiah, not the humble Messiah to die for the sins of the world.

Who are “The Fathers”?

Who are the “fathers” spoken of in the prophecy of Malachi?

John was rebuking some of the Pharisees and Sadducees who came to his baptism. He said to them, “O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance: And think not to say within yourselves, ‘*We have Abraham to our father*’; for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham” (Matthew 3:7-9).

Notice also how, in the parable of Lazarus and the rich man, Lazarus is carried “by the angels into *Abraham’s bosom*” (Luke 16:22). The rich man, figuratively in the resurrection, lifts up his eyes and sees a wall of flame—the *lake of fire*—approaching! He then cries out and says, “*Father Abraham*, have mercy on me . . .”

Later, in the discussion between the rich man and “father Abraham,” Abraham says, “They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.

“And he said, nay, FATHER Abraham: But if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent.

“And he said unto him, if they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from he dead.”(vv. 29-31).

Notice that, in this parable, Jesus refers to “Father Abraham”!

Notice another account of one of Christ’s controversies with Jewish religious leaders.

After Christ had said, “Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free,” they answered Him and said, “We be Abraham’s seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, ‘Ye shall be made free?’” (John 8:32, 33)

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Now notice a seeming contradiction.

Jesus said, “I know that ye are *Abraham’s seed*; but ye seek to kill me, because my word hath no place in you” (John 8:37).

Notice: Jesus acknowledges their racial claim to being Abraham’s children!

BUT notice how He *rejects their spiritual* claim to being Abraham’s children!

“They answered and said unto Him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, if ye were Abraham's children, *ye would do the works of Abraham*.

“But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: This did not Abraham.

“Ye do the deeds of your father...” (John 8:39-41).

Then Jesus said, “Ye are of *your father the devil!*” (John 8:44).

As the argument continued, the Jews spitefully asked, “Abraham is dead, and the prophets; and thou sayest, if a man keep my saying, he shall never taste of death. Art thou greater than OUR FATHER ABRAHAM, which is dead? And the prophets are dead: whom makest thou thyself?” (vv.52-53).

Jesus answered, “If I honor myself, my honor is nothing: It is my *father* that honoreth me; of whom ye say, that he is your God:

“Yet ye have not known him; but I know him: and if I should say, I know him not, I shall be a liar like unto you: but I know him, and keep his sayings.

“Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it, and was glad.

“Then said the Jews unto Him, thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?

“Jesus said unto them, verily, verily, I say unto you, before Abraham was, I AM!” (John 8:54-59).

Notice! These *unconverted*, hateful, murder-plotting Jews claimed to be the children of “Father Abraham”!

Jesus acknowledged the veracity of their claim racially, but REJECTED their claim *spiritually!* He chided them for claiming they were “Abraham's seed,” saying Abraham did not do the *works* they were doing!

Jesus then characterized His relationship with His FATHER in heaven; and showed that He, as VERY GOD prior to His human birth, had been BEFORE Abraham—was, in fact (had they been able to grasp it), Abraham’s FATHER!

Jesus was telling the people to repent and do the deeds of their *father* Abraham. The ministry of John the Baptist was a call to *repentance!*

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When one repents, he *does*, in fact, find that his heart is turning to “the FATHERS,” meaning the patriarchs, prophets and the “fathers” mentioned in the *Bible!*

This is what it is really meant by the prophecy concerning Elijah which is to come!

Notice! “God, who at sundry times and in diverse manners spake in time past unto the FATHERS by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by a Son, whom He hath appointed Heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds” (Hebrews 1:1, 2).

Who are “the Fathers” toward whom the “hearts of the children” are to be turned by the work of this latter-day Elijah?

Your Bible says they are “the just”! (Luke 1:17).

Notice it again: “And he [John the Baptist] shall go before Him in the spirit and power of Elias, 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!”

Notice what John’s father, Zecharias, was inspired to say of John the Baptist: “And thou, child, shall be called the prophet of the Highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to *prepare His way*; to give *knowledge of salvation* unto His people by the remission of their sins, through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the day spring from on high hath visited us, To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace” (Luke 1:76-79).

The ministry of John the Baptist was to ADULTS—a ministry crying out to “prepare the way of the Lord,” and to “*REPENT*”!

And who was one of those who were deeply moved by the angel’s message concerning John? His own FATHER, Zecharias!

And what did Zecharias say? “Blessed *be* the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people,
“And hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David;
“As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began:
“That we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us;
“To perform the mercy *promised to our fathers*, and to remember his holy covenant;
“The oath which he swore to our *father Abraham*,
“That he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear,
“In holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life.” (Luke 1:68-75).

Zecharias says that Abraham is “our father Abraham”! and speaks of the great God who is “to perform the mercy promised to OUR FATHERS and to remember his holy covenant.”

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John's message, when it took root deep within the hearts of mature adults, would cause a great and abiding realization of the enormous debt that sense of gratitude the living generation owed to such great patriarchs as Abraham!

In this way, disobedient and sinning men would find their "hearts turned to the *fathers*"!

The ministry of a modern-day Elijah is a ministry of a call upon all mankind to REPENT!

Even as John the Baptist fulfilled, typically, the ministry of Elijah who was to come, so there is to come a prophet who will become known over all the world as the greatest voice calling upon mankind to REPENT OF SIN, and will indeed be "turning the hearts of the children [this modern, sinning generation of *adults*] to the *fathers*"!

Its true meaning of the ministry of Elijah is, "And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers [the just and obedient servants, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the fathers of Israel] to the children [the disobedient children of Israel], and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord" The K&D Commentary agrees, "The fathers are rather the ancestors of the Israelitish nation, the patriarchs, and generally the pious forefathers, such as David and the godly men of his time."

This did not mean restoring the family, or uniting the family. Actually Jesus said the exact opposite was going to happen within the family unit, *that the message of the Gospel would divide families*, "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword.

"For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law.

"And a man's foes shall be they of his own household." (Matthew 10:34-36).

It will also cause families to betray one another, "Now the brother shall betray the brother to death, and the father the son; and children shall rise up against *their* parents, and shall cause them to be put to death" (Mark 13:13).

Now is this what God wants within families in the church? Of course not! Otherwise, why would the Holy Spirit have inspired the apostle Paul to speak so glowingly of the state of marriage; to urge husbands and wives to love and respect one another; to urge parents to bring up their children "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord"?

Why is there such strong emphasis on children being obedient to their parents (Ephesians 6:1) and over the appropriate roles of husband and wife?

No, when BOTH parties are converted; when both members of a family are members of God's true church, then the ideal family situation is that urged by the apostle Paul!

Sadly, this is not always the case. Sometimes, because one member of a family is called of God; his mind is open and he is *converted*, given God's Holy Spirit, it only *succeeds in alienating him*

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from his carnal-minded family members! Due to their hard heartedness and their willing not to understand, families become divided in their beliefs.

Notice what Christ promised: “And everyone that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name’s sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life” (Matthew 19:29).

You cannot find a promise that, when you are *converted*, it will result in immediate family harmony! Rather, it is more likely to result in the *opposite*!

However, for those who are *greatly blessed* to be the exceptions; where *whole families* are converted and come into God’s church, *then such family strife and division need not occur!*

So the real ministry of Elijah is a ministry of repentance from sin, and to be like their fathers Abraham Isaac and Jacob. And, as Malachi says, “And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and *the heart of the children to their fathers,*” (4:6). Then we see the reverse in this passage, “*the heart of the children to their fathers.*” Who are the “children” whose hearts are “just” and who are the “disobedient” fathers?

Notice verse 4 that says, “Remember ye the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, *with the statutes and judgments.*” The Expositors Bible commentary says, “ ‘*Malachi*’ makes this promise of the Law in the dialect of Deuteronomy: ‘statutes and judgments with which Jehovah charged Moses for Israel.’” (Emphasis added). In Deuteronomy *the children of Israel* set up stones on Mt. Ebal and “And thou shalt write upon the stones all the words of this law very plainly” (Deut 27:8). Then on Mt Gerizim and Ebal they were to bless and cure the people who obey or break the law. These were the new generation of *the children of Israel*, circumcised, and baptized through the river Jordon, see Deut 1:39; Joshua 3, 5 and 8:30-35. Their hearts were right and just in the sight of God. The leaders of Israel, the “fathers” in the *end time* are the disobedient ones, and Elijah is calling for them to repent. Jeremiah prophesied, “Because *your fathers* have forsaken me, saith the LORD, and have walked after other gods, and have served them, and have worshipped them, and have forsaken me, *and have not kept my law;*” (Jer 16:11). So, the obvious rendering here is, “And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children [of the obedient children of Israel] to their fathers [disobedient leaders of the Israelites in the end time]”

Elijah “restores all things”

The coming Elijah as prophesied by Jesus is to “restore all things.” What does this mean? The Pulpit Commentary says about John the Baptist, “*The event is still future, and was not fulfilled in the Baptist’s preaching,* however deep and extensive may have been its influence. Of course, John in a partial degree reproduced the character and acts of Elijah, directing the people to the eternal principles of justice and righteousness, to a reformation of religion and morals; *but he could not be said to have reconstituted, re-established all things;* though it is possible that, had his message been received and acted upon, some such effects would have been produced.” (Emphasis added). The Baptist ministry did not restore *all things* as prophesied by Jesus. John did it to some degree, but Jesus said “all things” will be restored before his coming. Another

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must come to do this. But what will he restore? *Doctrine*? NO! As Malachi says, the hearts and minds of the children of Israel back to God. When the nations of Israel are destroyed and they are in captivity, the time of reformation will come, and the people will repent. Barnes comments, "To 'restore' means to put *into the former situation*. See Mat 12:13. Hence, *it means to heal, to correct, to put in proper order*. Here it means that Elijah would put things in a proper state; he would be the instrument of *reforming* the people, or of *restoring* them, in some measure, to proper notions about the Messiah and preparing them for his coming." (Emphasis added). A time will come when those who are left of Israel will be restored, and their hearts reformed back to almighty God, *all of Israel*, not just a tiny portion of it. Elijah will be the one who will be instrumental in doing this, when Israel is in slavery and captivity in this end time during the 3 ½ period called Jacob's trouble of the great tribulation (Jer 30:7).

"And it shall come to pass in that day, *that the remnant of Israel, and such as are escaped of the house of Jacob, shall no more again stay upon him that smote them; but shall stay upon the LORD, the Holy One of Israel, in truth.*

"The remnant shall return, even the remnant of Jacob, unto the mighty God.

"For though thy people Israel be as the sand of the sea, yet a remnant of them shall return..." (Isaiah 10:20-22). This will be done because of Elijah's ministry on earth.

In Elijah's day he *restored* Israel back to God. In the book of Kings at Carmel during the showdown between the prophets of Baal, and Elijah the prophet of God. After Elijah demonstrated that the God of Israel is the only and true living God, it says, "And it came to pass at *the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice*, that Elijah the prophet came near, and said, LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou *art* God in Israel, and *that I am* thy servant, and *that I have done* all these things at thy word.

"Hear me, O LORD, hear me, *that this people may know that thou art the LORD God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again.*

"Then the fire of the LORD fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that *was* in the trench.

"*And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, The LORD, he is the God; the LORD, he is the God.*" (1 Kings 18:36-39). For a brief time Israel turned back to God; this is what will happen in the end time with the coming of the second Elijah. Not restoring doctrines that were lost or whatever else people try to imagine so they can claim that this or that person is modern day Elijah. The only evidence of end time Elijah will be the turning of ALL ISRAEL BACK TO GOD! That is a great event in and of itself!

Who is this coming Elijah who prepares Israel for the second coming of Jesus? First let's compare the similarities between Elijah and John the Baptist.

Similarities between John and Elijah

John the Baptist came in the Spirit and Power of Elijah, to turn hearts of fathers to children, and the disobedient to return to God, to prepare a people for the Lord, Luke 1:16-17. There are many similarities between John and Elijah, and a few differences, as the attached comparison shows:

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<u>John the Baptist</u>	<u>Elijah the Prophet</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Miraculous birth, from tribe of Levi & Judah • Preached in the wilderness • Preached the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins • Reproved Herod for his breaking God's law of marriage, in marrying his brother Philips divorced wife • Put to death by Herod at behest of Herodias daughter • Had long hair (was a Nazarite, Luke 1:15), was clothed in camels hair, with a leather skin about his loins (Mark 1:6) • Baptized many who followed him and came to him in the wilderness of Judaea Matthew 3:1-17, Luke 3:1-23 • Preached an uncompromising message • Lived in austere circumstances • Claimed to be the voice of one crying in the wilderness, John 1:19-23, Isaiah 40:1-10, Matthew 3:1-3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nothing said of his parents, probably from the tribe of Manasseh • Lived in the wilderness • Preached against sin, called for repentance • Reproved Ahab, Ahaziah, Jehoram for their sins • Spared by God, taken to 1st heaven in chariot of fire • A hairy man, with a leather girdle, 2Kings 1:8 • Had only one major follower: Elisha • Preached an uncompromising message • Lived in austere circumstances • Claimed to be God's servant, 1 Kings 18:36

Was Herbert W. Armstrong the Elijah to Come?

There are now today groups that have practically built a religion around the notion that Herbert W. Armstrong was the Elijah to come. HWA believed that he was the Elijah to come as well.

In the March 28, 1966, Co-Worker Letter, Armstrong claimed that he and his work were the 20th Century Ezekiel, Elijah or John the Baptist, preparing the way for the return of Christ. This was re-iterated in a November 1972, member letter. In a November 30, 1963 sermon, Armstrong proclaimed that, The very reason for the Church is to fulfill the prophecy of the work of Elijah as in Malachi 4:5 and Matthew 17:11, that of turning the hearts of the fathers to the children, and vice versa, and to restore all things. The Ambassador College Bible Correspondence Course, Lesson 53 (printed in 1969), pages 14-15, states that the end-time work of Elijah was being fulfilled by the Worldwide Church of God, as the Philadelphia Era of Gods True Church. John the Baptist did a one-man work. But today God works through the Body of Christ the Church composed of many members (Eph. 4:12,16). *The belief that the Elijah to Come is identified with a group of people, rather than a specific individual, has no basis in Scripture.*

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In the WCG booklet, *Where are Enoch and Elijah?* (1957, 1973), Herman Hoeh wrote this: “An Elijah is yet to come, however, said Christ after John was already dead. So just as John the Baptist was the forerunner of Jesus Christ at His first coming, another is to come before the great and terrible Day of the Lord, as a forerunner of Jesus Christ at His second coming. He, like John, will come in the spirit and power of Elijah to fulfill the commission of Malachi 4:5, 6, lest I come, says God, and smite the earth with a curse.

“The world of Christ’s day did not recognize John as coming in the power and spirit of Elijah. And neither will the world today recognize the one whom God sends in the spirit and power of Elijah shortly before the terrible Day of the Lord, when the Jesus Christ of your New Testament will intervene in world affairs to set up the government Kingdom of God on earth.” (page 24).

Herbert W. Armstrong, in his final book, *Mystery of the Ages* (paperback, 1985), identified himself as the end-time Elijah: “Both of these prophecies [Isaiah 40:3, 9-10 and Malachi 3:1] have a dual application. First, they refer to John the Baptist, who prepared the way before Jesus human ministry more than 1,900 years ago. BUT, as a prototype, or forerunner, these prophecies foretell one to prepare the way before Christ’s Second Coming as the King of kings and Lord of lords to rule all nations!...a human messenger preparing the way before Christ’s now imminent Second Coming ... a voice lifted up (greatly amplified by modern printing, radio and TV), crying out in the midst of today’s spiritual wilderness of religious confusion, announcing the immanency of Christ’s Second Coming Malachi 4:5-6 pictures the Elijah to come at the very end of the Church age...” (pages 8, 285-286).

The Philadelphia Church of God, presents in their book, *Malachi’s Message to God’s Church Today*, by Gerald Flurry (1990), bold support for the theory that Herbert W. Armstrong was the Elijah to Come: “Just as one John the Baptist prepared Christ’s way the first time, so one messenger (HWA) has prepared the way for Christ’s Second Coming” (page 8).

Does the over-all life and ministry of Herbert Armstrong bear any resemblance to that of Elijah and John the Baptist? Let us compare them without prejudice.

John/Elijah	Herbert W Armstrong
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Both lived plainly, John drank no wine • Took no titles • Humble men (Num 12:3) • Preached repentance and Gods ruling Kingdom. John baptized many. • John established no Church, told people to look for the soon-coming Messiah. • Lambasted false worshippers. • Told followers to follow Christ, not him. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lived richly, sometimes drank too much • Assumed titles: Apostle, Elijah, Zerubabel, etc • Proud man, feared by his associates • During his last nearly 15 years, preached give and get. Baptized few • Established centralized church organization, with tight central control • Withdrew anti-Catholic material, gained Catholic/Protestant support in California lawsuit

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • John lost his head for telling unconverted Herod that his marriage to a divorcee was unlawful • Elijah's life was continually threatened for telling the truth; John was martyred for telling Herod to repent of divorce • Jesus said John was an Elijah, John said he was not the Elijah • Restored Israel back to God 1 Kings 18:20, 39 • Elijah and John the Baptist were consistent throughout their ministry; they never had doctrinal error and never changed doctrine. Jesus said John the Baptist was not a reed shaken by (doctrinal) wind. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formerly said this, but in later life said, Follow me into the kingdom of god. • In 1974 and 1979, said that God doesn't hold unconverted responsible for their sinful divorce and remarriages • Died of old age, gave gifts to wicked rulers, and never produced the fierce opposition from public leaders like the preaching of Elijah and John. • HWA claimed that he himself was Elijah • The Israelites nations HWA failed to restore back to God • HWA changed doctrine many times
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Also in Jesus prophecy, the Elijah to come must immediately *precede* Jesus, just as John the Baptist *preceded* Jesus. Note that they were *contemporaries*! There was no space of time between their ministries, but they overlapped! People that hang their hopes upon HWA being Elijah, there is a problem however, he has been dead for over 28 years! Therefore, even if he restored all things, he still did a lousy job of being the Elijah to come because he died before Christ returned. The ministries must overlap!

To make matters worse, he not only died before Christ returned, but his successor was one that tried to destroy the Church from the inside-out. That fits neither the pattern of Elijah or John the Baptist. Instead Elisha asked for a "double portion" of the spirit of Elijah (2 Kings 2:9) and never wavered from the truth.

There are other comparisons one could make between Armstrong and Elijah/John the Baptist, few of which show any *similarity*. In fact, Herbert Armstrong's ministry generally stands in stark contrast to the preaching witness of Elijah and John the Baptist. There are many facts which make it improbable that Herbert W. Armstrong was the end-time Elijah the Prophet.

The best that we can say about Armstrong idolaters such as the PCG is that they are deceived and do not follow the Bible. In the July, 1991, issue of The Philadelphia Trumpet, published by the Philadelphia Church of God, Gerald Flurry states that: "HWA didn't preach that Petra was going to be the place of safety... He never said 1975 was to be the end of man's reign... Of course HWA did make some mistakes before and during World War II...[but] Mr. Armstrong was ALWAYS right in the overall master plan of prophecy. ALWAYS! (pp. 11-12).

When someone is aware of the facts, and still persists in his or her erroneous way, then you really have to feel sorry for them. This confusion and clouded thinking is *the result of idol worship*.

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18 Truths Restored

HWA gave a sermon listing the 18 restored truths that was revealed to him, hence making him Elijah to come. These truths somehow were concealed to the rest of mankind until the start of his ministry. During the latter years of his life Mr. Armstrong rarely showed any humility about his ministry, not like Elijah, Moses, or John the Baptist. We all must be humble servants of God, not boasters that pride ourselves and give glory to ourselves but to God and to God alone. “For we are labourers together with God: ye are *God’s* husbandry, ye are *God’s* building.” (1 Corinth 3:9).

These truths are:

1. The true Gospel	10. Knowledge of what the millennium is
2. The purpose of God	11. Truth about the holy spirit
3. God’s plan through the holy days	12. Begotten now
4. Government	13. Born again at the resurrection
5. Who, What is God	14. Identity of Israel
6. What and why is man	15. Understanding of prophecy
7. Spirit in man	16. Second and third tithe
8. First fruits	17. Identity of Babylon and her daughters
9. Satan is the guilty party	18. We are to be separate

All these points made were *never* restored. These truths were around before HWA was ever even born. One example is the Israelite identity. Many books including J.H. Allen’s book *Judah’s Scepter and Josephs birthright* was written in 1902 long before the Worldwide Church of God.

One other, the identity of Babylon and her daughters. Protestant Bible Commentaries (like Albert Barnes, Adam Clarke) you will discover that they taught that the woman whose that rides the beast of Revelation is the RC church. If you go back into the Church of God history of the 1800s and certainly the time before HWA appeared on the scene, you will discover they were ALREADY teaching the identity of Babylon and her daughters, as the RC church and her offspring.

Even if we assume this is correct, it leaves us with an enormous problem, that being that the Church of God Seventh-day ministers say that most of what Herbert Armstrong taught was already taught by them. A little bit of research into the old writings of the Church of God Seventh-day however paints a very different picture.

These are:

- 1) The Ten Commandments
- 2) The seventh day Sabbath
- 3) The name “the Church of God”
- 4) Tithing
- 5) Baptism by immersion
- 6) Non-baptism of children

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- 7) Anti Trinitarianism - two personages in the Godhead, not three
- 8) The Great Whore of Rev 17 is the Catholic Church
- 9) Catholic doctrine originated in Babylon
- 10) The dead do not go to heaven or hell
- 11) Mortality of the soul / The dead are asleep
- 12) The resurrection of the dead
- 13) Christ was in the grave three days and three nights
- 14) The days Christ was in the grave ran from Wednesday till the Sabbath
- 15) Christ died in the midst of the week as prophesied by Daniel
- 16) Sunday is the Mark of the Beast
- 17) The Mark of the Beast affects the forehead/seat of intellect and the hand/sign of work or labour
- 18) Rejection of the symbol of the cross
- 19) Rejection of Christmas
- 20) Rejection of Easter
- 21) The Christian is to keep the commandments by the power of the Holy Spirit
- 22) Clean and unclean foods
- 23) Christ is the Mediator between God and man, not Mary or someone else
- 24) The existence of a "True Church"
- 25) The Church is the Bride of Christ
- 26) The Church is the Family of God
- 27) The belief in an "end time Elijah" (G G Rupert taught it was himself)
- 28) The keeping of Passover on the 14th of Abib
- 29) The keeping of Pentecost
- 30) The validity of all of God's law including all the Holy Days (G G Rupert, Clarence Dodd)
- 31) British Israelism (J H Allen and others)
- 32) The belief that the return of Christ is imminent
- 33) The rejection of military service
- 34) Knowledge of the "day for a year" principle of interpreting prophecy
- 35) Knowledge that a prophetic year is 360 days
- 36) Knowledge that a "time" is a year; and "time, times and half a time" equals 1260 years
- 37) Knowledge of the meaning of the nations comprising the Daniel 2 statue
- 38) The four beasts of Daniel 7 are the same four world ruling empires of the statue of Daniel 2
- 39) The "little horn" of Daniel 7 is the Papacy
- 40) The knowledge that physical circumcision has been superseded by spiritual circumcision

Most of these beliefs and practices can be found in "A History of the True Religion" by Andrew Dugger and Clarence Dodd. Clearly, HWA did not "restore" these truths. The truths of the Bible are revealed by God to whom he chooses. God has the truth, and reveals it to anyone he chooses to reveal it.

Jesus said that his church will always be on this earth doing his work (Matthew 16:18). Do people think (and Mr. Armstrong for that matter) that God would *hide* his truth to his true church for all these centuries as HWA claimed? Absolutely Not! Why would God call them out? Call them out of what if the truth was concealed? The truth has to be *revealed* to them! How can HWA say the truth has been concealed for all these centuries, that is a direct contradiction to

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what Jesus taught, that the church would always be on this earth, and that God's truth would be revealed to them, so they are called out of this world and into his truth, not into more ignorance, that just doesn't make sense.

There are many more, but I believe that this is sufficient proof that HWA was not the Elijah to come. So who is?

Waiting for Elijah

The *opposite* of bold, unsubstantiated claims that a certain minister is Elijah, is the belief that we should do nothing in a work for God, and wait for Elijah. Jesus told his disciples to, "But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. . . .preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand." (Matthew 10:6, 7). The great commission in the 10th chapter of Matthew is appointed for the whole church to do, NOT JUST ONE MAN! Jesus told *all of his disciples* to do the work of God. He said "And what I say unto you I say unto **all, Watch.**" (Mark 13:37). The work of the watchman to Israel is for the whole church to do.

However, the Elijah to come, as the Elijah of old, will not need or require money to perform God's Work. Elijah had divine transportation to place him immediately, unhampered by security guards, before great leaders, to thunder God's message to repent. No, the work of Elijah does not need your money. The end-time Elijah does not need a support group to finance his work, with publications, and a paid radio and television ministry. Elijah's power from God will gain free worldwide publicity as we shall see in the prophecy.

If you do nothing in God's work now, you may well find yourself in the position of the wicked and slothful unprofitable servant of Matthew 25:24-30. You may find the real Elijah to come pointing a finger at you, saying REPENT! Don't just wait for Elijah and do nothing. God may not have called us to be an Elijah-one of the Two Witnesses. But, He has called us ALL to have a part, however small, in fulfilling His commission to the Church, Matthew 24:24, 28:19-20, Mark 16:15-20.

Recognizing the Elijah to Come

The Elijah to come will undoubtedly confront the leaders of the world with their sins, and modern worshippers of Baal with the choice to either serve God or Baal. This is basic Elijah Doctrine.

This wicked world needs an Elijah to condemn sin and lay it on the line. But how will we recognize the true Elijah to Come? By what they look like, or what they say? 2 Kings 1 gives us the yardstick. Elijah said "Thus saith the LORD," and told what God told him to say. No prophetic speculation, no scholarship about Greek and/or Hebrew words. Elijah condemned sin, in this case seeking a false god for healing, which is idolatry. He told the king he was guilty of sin, fearing no man, not fearing to be taken off television or radio for telling God's Truth.

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The Two Witnesses

In the end time, as noted above, the Elijah to come will restore Israel back to its original faith when Israel is in captivity and ruled by the heathen. Like Elijah and John the Baptist, Israel and Judah were under the rule of heathen dictators.

In Revelation 11:1-12 is given the famous prophecy of the Two Witnesses. Some have said, erroneously, that the Two Witnesses are the Old and New Testaments, which makes no sense at all, because the OT and NT do not have bodies, and cannot die and be raised up in three days. Neither can the Church as a whole be the two witnesses. Here are the facts that we do know about the Two Witnesses:

- (1) They are both prophets, and prophesy 1,260 days, clothed in sackcloth.
- (2) They are spiritually the two olive trees of Zechariah 4:3 (Psalm 52:8), the two candlesticks standing before God.
- (3) The Two Witnesses will be threatened, and literal or symbolic fire will proceed out of their mouths to devour their enemies. Or, this may be a figure of speech indicating they will call fire down from Heaven as Elijah did. Compare Revelation 11:5 with 2 Kings 1:10, 12 and Jeremiah 5:14, 23:29. Also consider that the two-horned false prophet of Revelation 13:11-18 will make fire come down from heaven on the earth, in the sight of men, and perform deceiving miracles. Do not think it will be easy to distinguish the true prophets (Two Witnesses) from the great false prophet.
- (4) They have power from God to stop the rain during their 3 1/2 year prophecy, turn waters to blood, and smite the earth with plagues as they want to.
- (5) The beast shall kill them, and their dead bodies will lie in the main street of Rome for 3-1/2 days. The wicked of the earth shall rejoice and send gifts to one another, because these prophets tormented them.
- (6) God will cause the spirit of life to come back to them, and raise them to their feet, causing fear on those that see them.
- (7) A voice from heaven will say come up hither, and the Two Witnesses will rise up in a cloud in the sight of their enemies, followed by a great earthquake. This will be at the close of the Second Woe of prophecy, the Sixth Trumpet.

Who are the Two Witnesses? We have many clues, but not their names. Notice the striking similarities between acts of these Two Witnesses and Moses and Elijah:

<u>The Two Witnesses</u>	<u>Elijah/Moses</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wicked world will feel tormented by their preaching, Revelation 11:10	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ahab and wicked Israel were troubled by• Elijah's preaching of Commandments

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Message called their testimony • Enemies finally succeed in killing them • Their dead bodies are protected by God and are not allowed to be buried • Clothed in sackcloth, not rich clothes • Fire proceeds from their mouths • Turn water into blood, bring plagues on earth • Are both prophets • Prophesied for 3 ½ years (Rev 11:3) • The whole world will witness their ministry and death (Rev 11:9, 10) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moses gave them prophecy in Deut 31:16 to 32:1-52, in which he testified as a witness against Israel • Enemies tried to kill them many times • God buried Moses in a secret place, God took Elijah away • Elijah clothed in leather girdle, Moses dressed plain. • Elijah calls fire from Heaven twice, 2 Kings 1 • Moses did this through God's power • Elijah a prophet, Moses was also a prophet (Acts 3:21-24, Deuteronomy 18:15-19; 2 Chronicles 21:12) • Elijah's ministry to Ahab was for 3 ½ years a type of the coming tribulation (James 5:17).
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The evidence from Malachi 4:4-6 associates Moses very closely with Elijah. Malachi describes in the fourth chapter the “day of the lord” (v.1), and to “Remember ye the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments” (v.4). The JFB Commentary makes this assessment, “ ‘Moses’ and ‘Elias’ are *here connected with the Lord’s coming*, so at *the transfiguration they converse with Him*, implying that the law and prophets which had prepared His way were now fulfilled in Him” (emphasis added). Although it doesn’t say it’s an individual, but one like Moses is implied that will testify and give witness, as the next verse in Malachi speaks of the coming individual “Elijah” that will come and testify as well. These are the two witnesses, a coming Moses and Elijah who will prepare the way for the coming of Jesus. The Transfiguration in the New Testament associates Moses and Elijah in a special role when the Messiah returns in glory. After the Transfiguration, Peter, James and John asked Jesus why Elijah must first come. They understood the vision of the Transfiguration to represent the coming of Messiah in His kingdom. Jesus answered and told them that Elijah must first come, and restore all things. John the Baptist was dead at this time, but was a type of Elijah, Matthew 17:1-13. The Elijah to come cannot have been totally fulfilled in John the Baptist, who preceded the first coming of Christ, not the second coming, before the dreadful day of the LORD spoken of in Malachi. The only strong evidence that the bible gives us is that *one of the two witnesses will be the Elijah to come*. The one who will be like Moses will preach the keeping of the Law of Moses, the other, the Elijah will preach repentance from sin. Regardless of whom God uses, the Two Witnesses will look, act and talk like Elijah and Moses. Until that day arrives, the church of God has a lot of work to do of the advanced announcement of God’s coming Kingdom; *that is our job*.