

another thing that you can do to obey Jesus' command to watch.

Wisdom and many scriptures demand that we look for more than one thing. Elijah is coming first. What? Oh, my.

Do we dare muddy the water even more? Well, perhaps this will serve to prove what I've taken the time to share with you. Many events precede the actual physical return of Jesus. Elijah is coming again, too.

I want to carefully examine the biblical record. It was a question on the mind of the disciples that starts this study. Look at Matthew 17, verses 11 and 12, and or Mark 9, 12 and 13.

Matthew and Mark tell identical episodes with one significant difference. The Greek in Mark supplies a word that Jesus said, *proton*, is the Greek word *proton*, that Matthew does not mention. It's the Greek word for first.

Just so you know, it's in there, first. Nearly every translation uses that word in the Mark account. Jesus says that Elijah comes first.

What's the setting? Jesus and his closest men have just witnessed the transforming power of God on his son. Also witnessing the event were the prophets Moses and Elijah. Seeing all this dazzling manifestation, questions came.

This one in particular, Master, we've been taught that Elijah is going to come first. But here you are. And Elijah hasn't come.

So are you the Messiah foretold in Scripture? That's what they want to know. I added my explanation of their question to the actual words. They wanted to be sure their lives are on the line.

And Jesus' assurance is twofold. Yes, he says, Elijah will come first. And he's already come.

At least in one sense, says Jesus. Urgent that we see both portions of Jesus' answer or the passage gets lost in hopeless confusion. There are two comings of Elijah spelled out by Jesus.

One of them had manifested after a sort in the person of John the Baptist. It's Luke who supplies the information via an angel in 117 that John will come in the spirit and power of Elijah. To do what Malachi said he would do in Malachi 4.6, turn the hearts of the people toward God so as to prepare the way for Jesus' teaching ministry in Galilee and the surrounding area.

So we know that in Jesus' mind, Elijah had already come. The people had been prepared. When it was time for him to move on, in John the Baptist that is, he quietly exited the stage and Jesus took his place.

But wait, before we let him walk out, hear his words to the seekers at the beginning of his powerful ministry. They wanted to know who he was and they rattled off a list of possibilities to him for affirmation or denial. One candidate on their list was Elijah.

Are you Elijah, they said. Denial. Clear denial.

He knew he was John, a man called to prepare the way for this first coming of Jesus. A voice for sure, even a fulfillment of a prophecy, but not Elijah. Contradiction here? Not at all.

He was like Elijah in many respects. He fulfilled the coming of Elijah in a spiritual way, but we all know he was not the man Elijah. And yet, that Elijah still lives and needs to be dealt with.

Remember he never died. If we stop here, we don't get the fullness of what Jesus was saying. Jesus said first, remember, Elijah does come first and restore all things.

Some versions, doing some interpreting, read will come first, meaning there's still a coming out there, they are indicating. That further explanation dovetails with other things we know about Old Testament prophecy and the book of Revelation. And Elijah, who waits in heaven as I write and as I speak, Malachi saw the coming of this great prophet before what? The great and terrible day of the Lord.

Well, it was a great day when Jesus came first time, but none could characterize it as terrible. That is, it was not earth shattering, accompanied by judgment and the very wrath of God as the final day will be. Yes, such a day is coming.

The prophets are clear on that point, but Jesus' first advent did not trigger the judgment. Yes, there was a sense that an Elijah figure had come and we must listen to the way the Son of God interprets this verse. But if Jesus is coming again, and he is, and on that day there will be judgment and there will be, it seems proper also to say that Elijah, this time the actual man, Elijah, will return before him to restore his own people to where they ought to be.

So far I appeal to logic, not clear revelation, but there's clear revelation, too. I was fascinated as I did the research for this to run across the fact that the two doors to the inner sanctuary of the temple were made of pure olive wood. You know, what's that got to do with anything? That's in 1 Kings 6, by the way, 31 and 32.

The two doors made of pure olive wood. To get to the Holy of Holies, you had to pass by two olive trees. And what's so fascinating about that? To answer that question, I take you first to Zechariah 4. The prophet is having a vision of a portion of the temple, it seems, and he is shown a golden lampstand accompanied by two olive trees.

When he asks about the olive trees, he's told that they are two anointed ones standing by the Lord. And there it ends in Zechariah. You see two trees that are called two beings.

That's all you know, until another prophet comes to the fore, a man we also call an apostle, the great Revelator John, Revelation 11, yet another temple scene. Three and one-half years are measured out for earth's inhabitants, the times of the Gentiles, nations that will trample the holy city. But concurrent with them, two witnesses, called also by John the two olive trees that stand before the Lord, a clear reference to the prophecy of Zechariah.

Now, lest anyone try to spiritualize or generalize the text, we're made sure that these two beings are not angels, nor are they groups of men or organizations, they are two men. And they prophesy for three and one-half years while Antichrist is waging his campaign against everything holy. They are at first unstoppable, they have supernatural protection flowing from within them outward to anyone who tries to harm them.

Shades of Elijah already. Read the stories of the men that he consumed by fire and you'll see the comparison there. They can keep rain from falling too, just like Elijah did.

But then they'll be killed by a power far greater than Ahab and Jezebel, and with no ravens and angels to deliver them. Their dead bodies will simply be left in the streets of Jerusalem. They'll be viewed on worldwide media, and each view will trigger jubilation and parties, a kind of a relief to a crisis, a crisis of righteousness.

The world will be so evil that righteousness will seem to be a crisis. That's not too far from where we are now, is it? Well finally the message of righteousness is finished, but in three plus days they're resurrected, just like their Lord, and they're called up to heaven while the world watches. Now if we say correctly that these witnesses are men, then which men? Zechariah saw them.

They were living then, but in the heavenly realms. They had lived before, but they had not died. It is appointed unto man to die though, and so they must come to earth to keep their appointment with death.

Certainly, Elijah must be one of them, carried up into the heavens while Elisha watches. He never dies. Enoch also is a candidate, though some want to put Moses in that second spot.

I don't know who the second one is. I'm pretty sure of the first one. For sure, in fact, I would say, because of what Jesus said and because of this evidence, I say that before Jesus comes, Elijah comes.

What a wonderful day that will be. What a wonderful time that we may be living in right now. I don't know if we're quite that evil a generation yet, but we're pretty evil.

Pretty evil. You need to confess that before the Lord. The Lord likes his Daniels that stand before him and confess the sins of the generation around them.

You never know what the Lord might do when you ask him. If you'd like a copy of this little booklet in book form, go to www.createspace.com. It's all one word, [createspace.com](http://www.createspace.com), and then a forward slash, ready for this, here come some numbers, like a phone number, 441-4323. You're going to have to stop this and read it again.

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I put the whole booklet on blogs in five days. So you've got it any way you want. I want to remind you that future podcasts are going to be featuring people like Mueller and Drummond and Rutherford and Goforth and Smith and Spurgeon, lots of folks coming up that will be sharing their works.

And we're going to share one more of mine coming up soon, either tomorrow or the next day. Who is Jesus? Something that you'll want to listen to so that you can pass that on to your friends or non-friends, but people who just need Jesus. Good little Christmas present you can pass on to them.

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I'll do the homework. You tell me what you would like to study. I'll do that with you.

And you can ask me a question that I can answer online also. That way we can be a little bit of a family and be interactive anyway. Well, thank you for tuning in.

I hope to talk with you again soon. Blessings. I want to always begin and end with a word from God and not just from me.

I want to go back to, if I could, Matthew 24. The way as we began. Just so that you see.

It's really, really very clear when Jesus is coming. When you see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place, then will be great tribulation. And then after, immediately after that tribulation, comes what surely seems to me like a rapture because Jesus is going to gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

We'll just leave it right there, okay? God bless you. Bye-bye.

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