

Of Whom the World is not Worthy.

In Luke 18:1-8 it is written:

- 1 And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint;*
- 2 Saying, There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man:*
- 3 And there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary.*
- 4 And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man;*
- 5 Yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.*
- 6 And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith.*
- 7 And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them?*
- 8 I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?*

There are many people in the world who claim to have faith and to believe God for those things which they have not seen. But yet, when God acts in their generation, the majority of people are unwilling or unable to accept what He does as being of God. People can look to the past, at the prophets of the old testament, such as men like Enoch and believe that Enoch "walked with God and he was not and God took him."

About Noah, they can say that he (by faith) believed God for something that had never ever happened on the earth before. But by his faith he condemned the whole world. They can believe the story of Abraham and his relentless search for a city. If it comes as a revelation to their hearts, they can believe that Sarah, in her old age, received strength to conceive seed. They are thrilled by the great faith story of Isaac, how God promised Isaac to Abraham and Sarah in their old age and how they considered not the deadness of Sarah's womb or the age of Abraham's body.

They feel strongly the immensity of God's request to sacrifice the boy who was to fulfill the prophecy that Abraham would be the "father of many nations." When God spoke and said, "Offer him as a sacrifice," we're told by Paul in Hebrews that Abraham believed God would raise the boy again from the dead. People cheer such faith on the part of the man who called himself "Abraham, father of many nations", for twenty-five years before his son was born.

How people do look back and admire the faith of Abraham. They also admire Isaac for his obedience to the word of God and his humility. They admire Isaac's blessing of Jacob concerning the things which were to come when the Israelites were in bondage in Egypt. Before Isaac died he told Jacob that he would bless them such that God would keep them in their

promised land. Jacob, when he lay dying, remembered the promise of his father and grandfather and blessed the sons of Joseph for the things that were yet to take place for the children of Israel. Joseph, in turn, when he was dying, spoke of the return of the Israelites to the land of Israel when it seemed that such was impossible. Christians who know their Bibles look back with admiration at what God did through these Bible characters. But of course, all that was in the past, not in the present.

Then we have Moses, born of the faith that could disregard a king's commandment, who refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter and went on to set the people free. The promise was carried out by faith and people today admire people of past days for taking unorthodox stands. But what about the promise of God for "their own day?"

People accept the vibrant story of Joshua when he led the children of Israel around the walls of Jericho. For six days they marched around the city once each day, and the walls stood. On the seventh day, in obedience to their commander, they marched seven times around, and the walls came down. Perhaps some people questioned this method of attack in those days, but we can look back now and say, "Blessed be the God of faith, the one who did things out of the ordinary, things that had never been done before."

In our imagination, we can go into a certain city with Joshua and his men as spies and meet the sinful woman Rahab who, because of her faith in God (though she didn't really understand), received the spies and was saved along with her household. What a wonderful thing, we think, today.

Nor is there a shortage of stories in the Bible concerning the movement of God among His people. The witnesses, Paul said, are too numerous to mention: Gideon, Samson, David, and Samuel, to name a few, and all of the prophets who wrote in the Old Testament. Some subdued kingdoms. Many wrought righteousness, obtained promises, some stopped the mouths of lions. The three Hebrew children quenched the violence of fire. They escaped the edge of the sword. By their weakness others were made strong. They waxed valiant in the fight and one man stood and by an uplifted hand turned an entire army into flight. Women received their dead back to life by the actions and lives of the Prophets of God of the Old Testament.

There were others who, that they might obtain a better resurrection, would not accept deliverance. Others went through cruel trials of mockings and scourgings. They suffered bonds and imprisonment. They were stoned, even sawed asunder. When free of the bonds of men, they wandered, destitute, in sheepskins and goatskins, afflicted and tormented. They lived in deserts, and in mountains, in dens and caves. The Apostle Paul tells us in Hebrews 11, that the world was not worthy of them, for through it all they cried out for the people and against the evils of idolatry, greed and lust.

My purpose is to bring out the truth of what God has done in this generation. John 20:30 says of his day, "But these are written (by the Apostles who were eyewitnesses in Jesus' day), that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through His name." Now there is no way for people to know the truth, except it be called to their attention. Therefore, there are some truths buried in the Scriptures that I must call to the attention of those who may never notice their significance. To do this, I must return again to the subject of John the Baptist, because it is a critical point. The people MISSED John, the first Forerunner, because he came in response to certain Scriptures, and they will MISS the SECOND Forerunner for the same reason.

The Promises of both the FIRST coming of Christ and His wondrous SECOND coming are BOTH foretold in Malachi. Reading then from the last two verses of the Old Testament, Malachi 4:5-6,

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

6 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.

Elijah, the great Prophet through whom a widow once received her son back to life, is promised to return *"before the great and dreadful day of the Lord."* To me, there are two things that this Scripture says about the time when Elijah comes: FIRST, it would be *"before the great and dreadful day of the Lord."* SECOND, his message will *"turn the hearts of the fathers to the children and the heart of the children to the fathers."*

Leaving these promises of Malachi for a moment, let us examine a prophecy concerning John the Baptist. Luke 1:15-17 tells of John's father receiving a promise from God that a son would be born to his wife, Elizabeth:

It is written ...

15 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.

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

17 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.

Now, nowhere in this promise to John's father do I find that John was to *"turn the heart of the children to the fathers."* Naturally, this raises a question in my mind as to whether John the Baptist fulfilled ALL of Malachi's prophecy in Malachi 4:5,6. Also when I read Matthew 17:11, I find that Jesus Himself leaves a question as to whether John fulfilled this portion of the prophecy by the prophet Malachi. Notice Matthew 17:10-11,

10 And his disciples asked him, saying, Why then say the scribes that Elias must first come?

11 And Jesus answered and said unto them, Elias truly shall first come, and restore all things.

Peter announces in Acts 3:20-21 that this time of restoration of all things will be at the time of the return of the Lord:

It is written ...

20 And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you:

21 Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.

Now to summarise and to pin this topic down, Malachi 4 says that God will send Elijah before the coming of the *"great and dreadful"* day of the Lord. If John the Baptist came in the spirit of Elias (as the scripture testifies that he did), then we should look and see whether John did the

works of "that Elijah" who was to come according to Malachi's prophecy. First, I ask the question: was there a great and dreadful day of the Lord when John the Baptist came? The answer is that there was not. Did John restore all things ? According to Acts 3:21 we would say he did not. So then is it possible that there is yet a prophet to come in the spirit of Elijah who is to restore all things just before the coming of the "great and dreadful" day of the Lord ?

Here then is the key. We are to look for a prophet, with the spirit of Elijah, to come before the return of the Lord. Scriptural evidence points to this being true. At this point, some may begin to accept this fact, yet they will ask how they are to recognise such a prophet. Let me ask a sincere question: What vindication would you think a prophet should have ? WHO would you have to vindicate him ? Would you believe him to be a prophet if the pope said he was? What if the World Council of Churches proclaimed him to be a prophet of God? Would you believe if I said he was a prophet? Your God-given sense tells you that none of these would be adequate vindication. There is only one way that God had ever vindicated anything and I will explain that now.

The Bible is the Word of God. The Bible *itself* declares itself to be the Word of God. It is self-vindicating. Revelation 22:18-19 shows just how emphatically the Bible declares that it is the Word of God.

It is written ...

18 For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book:

19 And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.

So, if you do not believe what is written in the Bible, every word of it, not adding to, not taking away from, then your name cannot remain written in the Book of Life.

The Bible is pretty sure of itself, I would say, in the language that it uses in 2nd Timothy 3:16-17,

16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

17 That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

The Bible doesn't give you permission anywhere to take one portion of it out; You must believe it all. 2nd Peter 1:20-21 reads:

20 Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation.

21 For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

Thus there is no other proof that the Bible is the Word of God other than the Bible saying that it is.

Now, will the Son of Man find faith when He returns to Earth ? Can you believe that this is the Word of God ? Not unless you have faith, which, within itself, is a gift of God. You may agree on

the vindication of the Word by the Word, but you feel that with a prophet the situation is different. In that case let us look to Moses. In Exodus 3:13-14, we see who declared Moses to be a prophet when he went down to the children of Israel:

13 And Moses said unto God, Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What is his name? what shall I say unto them?

14 And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.

Who vindicated Moses? Did they take a vote and agree that he was a prophet? Did Pharaoh stand up and declare that he was a prophet sent from God? No, Moses was vindicated by what God had told him and that was all that Moses had to go on. But remember the children of Israel had been promised a deliverer. So it was that after Moses had led them out of Egypt, and across the Red Sea, had asked God to feed them quail and manna, had received the Ten Commandments miraculously carved in stone, and had given them, time and again, the Word of the Lord, there were still many who did not believe him to be God's man. How could such a thing be? Simply because they wanted somebody to vindicate him. They asked how they were to know that the Word of God came to Moses. There should have been no doubt after all they had seen, but yet they did doubt. They had faith in God and His keeping His Word, yet they couldn't believe Moses was God's prophet in the face of overwhelming evidence that he was sent by God to them. They were simply blind.

Remember, WHO vindicated John the Baptist? Let us go through this completely again so that there will be no doubt.

When the people went to enquire of John "who he was", as told in John 1:19, they were aware of the prophecy of Malachi 4:5-6a. They knew also, no doubt, of the word that had come to John's father before John was born, how he would go forth in the "spirit of Elias" and turn the hearts of the "fathers to the children". Now there can be only two reasons for John's negative answer to the question of the people as to whether he was Elias. Either they were asking him if he was the Elias of a different verse of Scripture than applied to him, or he didn't know the word. But, I can prove that John did know the Word, because when they went on to ask him, "Are you that prophet?" John knew that they referred to the prophet promised by Moses in Deuteronomy 18. His denial then was of being that prophet that Moses said would be one like unto himself. Finally John placed himself, in John 1:22-23,

It is written ...

22 Then said they unto him, Who art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself?

23 He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, ...

John knew the Word well enough to know that Isaiah said in Isaiah 40:3 that one would come. "The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God." He also knew that Malachi 3:1 said, "Prepare the way before Me," as the prophet Isaiah had also said. Yet John denied being Elijah. He knew that he was to turn the hearts of the "fathers to the children" because his father, Zacharias, had received that prophecy. John also knew that he was in the spirit of Elijah, so is it possible that they were asking him whether he was the Elijah of Malachi 4 who was to turn the heart of the "children to the father" before the "great and dreadful" day of the Lord? Naturally, he answered

them that he was not "that Elijah". But, who vindicated John? The people were very interested in who he was, but who was it that stood up and told them ? He told them himself who he was, as recorded in John 1:23:

Let's read it again ...

23 He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias.

Who vindicated Christ ? Luke 9:18-20 states ...

18 And it came to pass, as he was alone praying, his disciples were with him: and he asked them, saying, Whom say the people that I am?

19 They answering said, John the Baptist; but some say, Elias; and others say, that one of the old prophets is risen again.

20 He said unto them, But whom say ye that I am? Peter answering said, The Christ of God.

In another account, Jesus replied: "Flesh and blood hath not revealed this unto you, but my Father which is in Heaven, and upon this rock (of revelation) I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." (Matt 16:17)

This gives us our first clue to the vindication of a prophet. It comes by revelation. And it comes by that prophet vindicating himself. The Word of God vindicates itself to be the Word of God. Moses declared himself to be a prophet of God. John the Baptist said that he was the one of whom Isaiah spoke, and Jesus taught His disciples that He was the Christ.

Matthew 26:62-65 records the poor attempt of an unbelieving priest to discover the Truth of Jesus Christ:

62 And the high priest arose, and said unto him, Answerest thou nothing? what is it which these witness against thee?

63 But Jesus held his peace. And the high priest answered and said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God.

64 Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.

65 Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy.

The unbelievers, especially those in authority, wanted to know, but they couldn't believe the Truth because there was no faith or revelation in their hearts. Mark 14:60-62 also records the incident:

60 And the high priest stood up in the midst, and asked Jesus, saying, Answerest thou nothing? what is it which these witness against thee?

61 But he held his peace, and answered nothing. Again the high priest asked him, and said unto him, Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?

62 And Jesus said, I am: and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.

Jesus had declared unto them publicly a number of times as he did in John 10:30: "*I and my Father are one*" When Jesus vindicated Himself, telling who He was, they took up stones to stone Him. BUT when Jesus first began to reveal Himself, to try to get the people to believe who He was, we find that, He referred them, NOT to what He said, BUT to what He did, as in John 2:23:

23 Now when he was in Jerusalem at the passover, in the feast day, many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did.

When John the Baptist sent messengers to ask who He was, Jesus replied as recorded in Matthew 11:5,

5 The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them.

Jesus sent messengers back to tell John that they had seen these things, meaning that John would know that the works He did spoke of Him.

It is written in John 8:24 ...

24 I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins.

But in John 10:36-38, Jesus says this ...

36 Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?

37 If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not.

38 But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him.

Jesus told them that if you can't believe what I tell you, then believe what you see me do. Now there is no other vindication of a prophet of God: FIRST, he will tell you who he is. SECONDLY, he will do the works that he is sent to do. That is how you can tell a prophet sent from God.

Now then, if there be a prophet before the coming of the "great and dreadful" day of the Lord, one in the spirit of Elijah. there are certain works that he will be expected to do. His works will be done as one in the spirit of Elijah. He will "turn the hearts of the children back to the fathers" He will fulfill Matthew 17:11 where Jesus says he will "restore all things" In some translations, this passage reads "He shall correct those things that have gone off into error."

Chapter 10 of this book covers the Ages of the Church from the days of Paul till the present in greater detail; however, the book of Revelation speaks of this last age, the Laodicean Age, as having a messenger who will tell them they are "wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked," and don't know it. In Revelation 10:7, this messenger is referred to as the Seventh Angel and says that, "*when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to His servants the Prophets.*"

Thus there is a definite work that the Prophet of Malachi 4 is to do. He will not be vindicated by a denomination. He will not be agreed with by the majority, but he will know who he is. There will be those who will see him and will not know him, but there will also be those with the same spirit as those who accepted Jesus by His works, saying in John 7:31. *"When Christ cometh, will He do more miracles than these which this man hath done?"*

But when this prophet of Malachi 4 comes with the spirit of Elijah to restore all things and finish the Mystery of God, the world will not be worthy of him, any more than they were worthy of the prophets of old. The majority of the people will be prone to have so much religion and to assert so many rights, that they will be blind to the visitation.

This man will come, doing only good. He will come fulfilling Scripture, bringing a message to the Elect, the Bride of Christ, but he will be hated by the religious leaders. They will manifest the same spirit as those who stood at the foot of the cross and said, "He saved others but himself he cannot save." Every move that this prophet makes will be to serve humanity, yet he will be criticised, misunderstood, and rejected because of the Doctrine he brings. Ordained a prophet from the womb, as all the prophets were, his coming will forerun the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ - and he will come in the spirit of Elijah.

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