

The New Season The Spirit of Elijah

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Adam was separated from his Father, and as sin proliferates fatherlessness will become the defining condition of the earth. But into this mix, God will send the restoration because the intent of God is to restore....restore the relationship between God and man. In fact, here it is said in the book of II Corinthians chapter 5 the following is said, "Therefore if anyone is in Christ he is a new creation; the old has passed, the new has come. All this is from God who has reconciled us to Himself through Christ." That's II Corinthians chapter 5 verse 17 and following, "God has reconciled us to Himself through Christ and has given us the ministry of reconciliation. That God was reconciling the world to Himself in Christ, not counting mens sins against them and He has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christs ambassadors as though God were making His appeal through us. So we implore you on Christs behalf, be reconciled to God. God made Him who had no sin to be sin for us so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God."

Now here is the question: how could we in fact be given a message of reconciliation, how could we be permitted to reconcile men to God? Clearly, from the time that man was separated from God his Father, to the time that this ministry of reconciliation had been given, there had to have been some series of events that would permit the reconciliation of man who had been separated from his Father, to occur. You see, when we speak of the gospel in the churches today, we're not speaking a gospel of 're'conciliation; we're speaking of a gospel of being saved. And we assume that because someone is saved he is reconciled to God, but the word 'reconciliation' is a specific term of art. It means 'fixing a broken relationship', it means 'healing the breach'; otherwise it's 'introduction'. So the very fact that our gospel is the gospel of reconciliation presumes that there was a state of being that was lost. Now, what's funny is we do not understand and we do not appreciate the reality that what God in fact created when God made man was a son; God was making sons. Adam, Luke chapter 3, "Adam was the son of God." Now when sin entered in by reason of Adams disobedience, separation came between a man and his Father. And all the children of that man were as separated from the Father as the man himself was because the curse that Adams sin brought upon his children, was he introduced an environment of sin from which man could not extract himself. God had to extract him

when the time was right.

So repeatedly God showed us, in the Scriptures, the model by which He was going to reconcile His sons to Himself. Now the fantastic aspect of this is that all throughout the Scriptures He gives us, if you like, 'prophetic breadcrumbs', meaning He tells us what He's going to do. And He rolls out, at the end of the Old Testament, He tells us in the book of Malachi chapter 4 verses 15 and 16, He says, "See, I'm going to send you the spirit of Elijah, who will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children and the children to the fathers." He said the alternative would be, "I'd have to destroy the land."

So how was God intending to heal the breach between God and His sons, between that people who would come from the race of Adam, who would be sons of God? God said, "I'm going to send the spirit of Elijah," and this spirit of Elijah would turn the hearts of the fathers to the children and the children to the fathers. Well what's the spirit of Elijah? Well let's go back and look at Elijah for a moment. Let's take a quick look at II Kings, in chapter 2 verse 13. Actually, let's start a little before that. We'll pick it up where Elijah and his servant Elisha were having a discussion. Verse 5 says, "The company of prophets at Jericho went up to Elisha and asked him, 'Do you know that the LORD is going to take your master from you today?' 'Yes I know,' Elisha replied, 'but do not speak of it.' Then Elijah said to him, 'Stay here, the LORD has sent me to the Jordan.' And he replied, 'As surely as the LORD lives and as you live, I will not leave you.' So the two of them walked on. Fifty men of the company of the prophets went and stood at a distance, facing the place where Elijah and Elisha had stopped at the Jordan. Elijah took his cloak, rolled it up, and struck the water with it, the water divided to the right and to the left and the two of them crossed over on the dry ground. When they had crossed, Elijah said to Elisha, 'Tell me, what can I do for you before I am taken from you?' 'Let me inherit a double portion of your spirit.' Elisha said. 'You've asked a difficult thing,' Elijah said, 'yet if you see me when I am taken from you it will be yours, otherwise not.' And as they were walking along and talking together, suddenly a chariot of fire and horses of fire appeared and separated the two of them and Elijah went up to heaven in a whirlwind. Elisha saw this and cried out (very significant), 'My father, my father.' Chariots and horsemen of Israel and Elisha saw him no more. Then he took hold of his own clothes and tore them apart. He picked up the cloak that had fallen from Elijah and went back and stood on the bank of the Jordan. Then he took the cloak that had fallen from him and struck the water with it. 'Where now is the LORD, the God of Elijah?' he asked. When he struck the water it divided to the right and to the left and he crossed over. The company of the prophets from Jericho who were watching said, 'The spirit of Elijah is resting on Elisha,' and they went to meet him and bowed to the ground before him." And it goes on.

Now, a remarkable story in the Scriptures; it comes down to the expression of Elisha who when he saw Elijah being caught up in the whirlwind after they were separated when a

chariot of fire and horses came through and separated them he cried out and he said, "My father, my father." Then he picked up the robe and struck the water and the fifty of the company said, "Surely the spirit of Elijah is upon Elisha." Now I want to show you this in the New Testament how it comes forward. Now this is the story in the Old Testament, at the end of the Old Testament in Malachi, Malachi says that God will send the spirit of Elijah who will restore the hearts of the fathers to the children and the children to the fathers. And He said the alternative would be, "I'd have to come and destroy the land." Here it is, this is from Malachi chapter 4 verse 5, "See, I will send you the prophet Elijah before that great and dreadful day of the LORD comes. He will turn the hearts of fathers to their children and the hearts of the children to their fathers, or else I will come and strike the land with a curse."

Now Elijah, when he was taken up, was replaced by Elisha and Elisha had a double portion....a double portion...of the grace that was in Elijah. That's significant, because now come to the New Testament and in the book of Luke chapter 1 verse 17 you will see an interesting fulfillment of this prophetic scripture spoken here. In Luke 1:17 the following is said....this is when Zachariah, the father of John the Baptist, was visited by an angel who told him about John. The following is said, "He will be great in the sight of the LORD," verse 16, "Many of the people of Israel will he bring back to the LORD their God and he will go on before the LORD (meaning he will fore run Jesus) in the spirit and power of Elijah to turn the hearts of fathers to their children and disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous to make ready a people for the LORD."

Now, the final piece in this puzzle, is what Jesus has to say in the book of Matthew chapter 11 verse 14. In Matthew 11:14 Jesus is speaking of John the Baptist and He quotes the Scripture, "I will send My messenger ahead of You who will prepare the way before You." And then He speaks of John and He says of men born of women...no greater than John but He said but the least in the kingdom will be greater than John. Then He goes on to say, "From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven has been forcefully advancing and forceful men lay hold of it. For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John." Now it's critical that you hear this, verse 14, "And if you are willing to accept it, he is Elijah who was to come. He who has ears to hear, let him hear." Then He goes on to say, "To what shall I compare this generation..."

Jesus says that John the Baptist is the fulfillment of the prophet Elijah who was to come. The fascinating thing is that Elijah, as powerful and important as Elijah was; Elisha was greater, by double. So in a real sense, Elijah was the forerunner of Elisha; like John was the forerunner of Jesus. And John would say, "I must decrease while He increases." The sign, you see, of the time when God will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children is when John the Baptist came to announce Jesus, for Jesus has the double portion, for He is the firstborn...He's the firstborn of the Father. So Elijah fore runs Elisha who has the double portion and it's Elisha who is the type of Christ; Elijah is a type of John. But the

prophecy from Malachi says the days when God would restore, would reconcile Himself to His sons and would permit the ministry of reconciliation to heal the breach between God and His sons which came up from the days of Adam and will continue until the days of Jesus, when the One who has the double portion has come, that day God will begin to heal the breach again between His sons and Himself. The announcement that that day had come came by John the baptist who came as Jesus said, "If you can receive it in the spirit of Elijah." He wasn't the quote 'incarnation' of Elijah because there is no 'incarnation', biblically reincarnation is unsound, it's not the truth. He didn't say he would come 'as' Elijah, He said he will come 'in the spirit of' Elijah. So he's like Elijah who prophesies the days of reconciliation.

Now it's fascinating because Elisha says, when he sees Elijah being taken up, he says, "My father, my father." Jesus would say, "Abba, Father," or, "My God, My God." This is the key, this is the prophetic key of understanding as to how God intended, through Jesus, to restore the hearts of the fathers to the children. The prophetic key is, "My Father, My Father." We'll be able to recognize how in that way.

Now Jesus comes to show us the Father, the ministry of Jesus may be summarized by His own words, "I have come to show you the Father." Now how does He intend to do that? Well first off, let's understand something about the authority with which Jesus came into the earth. What authority did He have? He said that He was and He occupied a number of titles. One was 'Everlasting Father'. From the book of Isaiah, "Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the government shall be upon His shoulders and His name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father. A 33 year old man being called the Everlasting Father? Yes. In what way is He the Everlasting Father? And how does this restore the heart of the Father God to the children and the children to the fathers? How does this function, what is this about? The answer is, He said, "I have come to show you the Father." "Well talk to me more about that," you may say, "How does He show us the Father?" The answer is, He said, "I am only doing what I see My Father doing." He said, "Its the Father who is living in Me who is doing His work...the Father living in Me." What does that mean? That means Jesus provided a location in time by giving up His own right to rule and govern His person; He gave His person, His body, His mind, His Spirit, He gave everything to God as a complete sacrifice. And then God came and lived in Him by the Spirit. The Spirit would instruct Him as to what to say, the Spirit would instruct Him as to what to do.

So the conclusion is, that in His whole life, He only did what He saw the Father doing; this is the quintessence of discipleship. Discipleship is not...is not...teaching somebody how to be a good church member, this isn't discipleship. We may call it that, but it doesn't make it so. From the very beginning, the pattern was established by God, who disciplined, disciplined, Adam. So that the responses of Adam were like God. Adam began to rule the way God rules. To this very day, we see the effects of Adams arrangement of

his inheritance. Adam was made the ruler of the world, God said to Adam, "Have dominion over the whole earth," and Adam began to rule the earth. And he arranged the whole earth according to a kingdom arrangement; he associated the animals that went together in one filum, in one order and then another order and another order. And he arranged the plants in the same way, things according to their own kind and to this day we still refer to the animal kingdom, we refer to the plant kingdom. Because the one who arranged them, arranged them with the mentality of a king. Where did he learn that, considering that he had just been made out of dust of the ground? He learned it from his Father. Adams Father was God, Adam learned how to arrange the world from his Father with whom he met everyday until the fall; this was the original discipleship. The Last Adam was also discipled by the Father, and we'll speak about that in another broadcast, in another message. And from this, we have been given the pattern of discipleship. What we see with Elijah and Elisha is a father discipling a son; Elijah was the father who was discipling Elisha and Elisha wanted to act just like his father. And indeed when Elijah was taken up into heaven, Elisha cried out, "My father, my father."

Now here is the nub of the thing. It was always the intention of God to use one man to show another the character of God the Father; this was the order of society. The order that God established in society was patriarchal. The intention was, by a patriarchal order, that a man might see the Father God in the relationship that he would have with his own human father, or the father who reminds him of God the Father. A human father is supposed to remind a disciple, a son, of the heavenly Father. So Jesus would say it this way, "If you have seen Me, you have seen the Father because the Father and I are one." In this sense, Jesus was the Everlasting Father in that He perfectly modeled, completely presented, with nothing left to chance, with nothing unfinished; He perfectly showed who God the Father was. When they looked upon His actions, they did not see a 33 year old man, for His actions were not the actions of a 33 year old man, by the standards of antiquity or by modern standards. He was not self centered, He was not particularly naive, He was not preoccupied with clothing Himself, feeding Himself and the like, He was not worried about His career. None of the things that so typically characterize 33 year old men could possibly be said to be the way Jesus was because at 33 He had perfected..He had perfected...the representation of God the Father. He was, if you like, the exact representation of God. He did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, although He was the equal of God; He was the Word who became flesh. But He came into the earth, not to grasp equality with God and to show Himself to be the equal of God; He came into the earth to be the exact representation of the Father.

So He took on the form of a servant and He was found in the likeness of men but He was the Servant of God, He perfectly and completely and without any unfinished aspect to it, He presented the nature and the character of God the Father in the earth. And He did it in the presence of His disciples so that they would see how the Father was by knowing, and seeing, and walking with, Jesus. As God discipled Adam, Jesus discipled twelve, Paul

discipled Timothy, and so on. In this time, we have gotten used to referring to men as 'pastors'. I would like to suggest that we change the word to become a more accurate representation of what God intended because pastoring today is mostly about training people for membership in churches and to serve in churches. Change the word to 'father' because that's what it actually is, to have a spiritual father.

Now I'll pursue this in the next broadcast and we'll look at some of the things that Paul had to say about spiritual fathers. I'm Sam Soleyn, God bless you, I'll talk to you more about this. Bye bye.