

THE COMING ELIJAH
MALACHI 4:5

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PREFACE

In the opening of the rich mines of the Scripture much has already been done, but very much still remains to be accomplished. I consider it a God-given privilege for me to be able to search the Scripture and find the true meaning. During this past year, I have searched for the true meaning of Mal. 4:5 "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord". The purpose of this monograph will be to set forth the findings of this search.

First of all, I dedicate this monograph to my Lord and Saviour praying that it may be used for His honor and glory. In the next place, I would like to dedicate this monograph to my wife, Beverly, without whose "keeping the home fires burning" this monograph would have been impossible to accomplish.

I wish to express my appreciation to Dr. John C. Whitcomb, Jr., for his kind and helpful suggestions in the preparations of this monograph; Dr. Benjamin A. Hamilton for instruction in the format, and the entire faculty of Grace Theological Seminary who have been used of God to help equip me for His service.

INTRODUCTION

My interest was first aroused in this passage while I was taking the course in Old Testament prophets under Dr. Whitcomb. In that class he made a statement something like this, "Perhaps it is time that we rethink the whole problem of whether or not such Old Testament characters as Elijah, David, etc., will come back in the future."

To me this was a challenge concerning a subject that I had never even considered. Therefore, I set out in an effort to find the answer concerning one of the characters, namely Elijah, that the Old Testament seems to indicate will come back in person before the consummation of the world.

This passage is very important in the study of prophetic Scripture, in that it has an important bearing on how we interpret prophetic Scripture in regard to eschatology. The question before us is: Will Elijah the Old Testament prophet come back in the future and to what extent did John the Baptist fulfill this prophecy? The answer to this question will have a definite bearing on the teaching concerning the events of Christ's first advent and especially His second advent. It will affect

our attitude toward all such prophetic Scripture.

This is a passage with several views. So that the reader may evaluate the final conclusion of this monograph, I will give a statement of the problem followed by a presentation of all the various views which have been found. Then I will seek to show why I hold the view that I do by refuting all opposing views and showing their errors. I purpose in this way to give an over-all look at what others have thought concerning this passage and also to show why I hold the view set forth in this monograph.

HEBREW TEXT

According to Biblia Hebraica, third edition,
edited by Rudolf Kittel.

וְהָיָה כִּי יִשְׁמַע
הַיְיָ אֶת הַקּוֹל
וְהָיָה כִּי יִשְׁמַע
הַיְיָ אֶת הַקּוֹל
וְהָיָה כִּי יִשְׁמַע
הַיְיָ אֶת הַקּוֹל

NOTE: There are no important variant readings.

SEPTUAGINT TEXT

SEPTUAGINT TEXT

According to Septuaginta, edited by Alfred

Rahlfs

καὶ ἰδοὺ ἐγὼ ἀποστέλλω ὑμῖν Ἡλίας
τὸν θεσβίτην πρὶν ἔλθεῖν ἡμέραν
κυρίου τὴν μεγάλην καὶ ἐπιφανῆ,

NOTE: There are no important variant readings.

ENGLISH VERSIONS

King James Version, 1611

Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord.

Rotherham's Emphasised Bible, 1872-1897

Lo! I am sending unto you Elijah the prophet, before the coming of the great and awful day of Yahweh;

American Standard Version, 1901

Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and terrible day of Jehovah come.

Moffatt's Bible, Old Testament, 1924

Before the great and dreadful day of the Eternal dawns, I send you the prophet Elijah;

Revised Standard Version, 1952

Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and terrible day of the Lord comes.

Douay-Challoner Bible, 1749-1752

Behold I will send you Elias the prophet, before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord.

At this time of the writing of this book, the Jews had returned from exile with high hopes. With the inspiration of Haggai and Zechariah they had rebuilt the temple. While this building did not compare in size or beauty with the original one which was destroyed by the Babylonians, it did serve the purpose. But as the years passed by, the Jews became more and more disillusioned. The promised prosperity did not return, life was hard, and they were surrounded by enemies, such as the Samaritans.

They began to doubt God, and they questioned His love and justice concerning them. They began also to think that there was no reward in obeying God or His commandments, for it seemed to them that the evil and selfish people were the ones who prospered.

It was at this time that the prophet Malachi was brought upon the scene by God. "The prophet proceeded to answer them and to show them that this skepticism was hypocritical."¹

He told them that sins of all kinds prevailed: sorcery, adultery, dishonesty, oppression of the weak,

¹J. T. H. Adamson, "Malachi," The New Bible Commentary Ed. Francis Davidson (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1953), p. 764

and ungodliness in general. Then true to his call as a prophet, Malachi condemned the sins and told the people to repent. He told them to purify their worship, to obey the law, and pay their tithes in full, and then God's blessing would come again.

But Malachi seemed to realize that the people were too hardened to repent and in the very last part of the book he looks not for their repentance, but for the Lord to do something. "The great and terrible day of the Lord" would come. And in that "day" God would vindicate the godly and destroy the wicked. That "day" would be prepared for by the coming of the prophet Elijah. With Malachi the curtain came down on the prophecy until the coming of John the Baptist.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEMS

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Major Problem: What is the Meaning of Mal. 4:5?

Minor Problem: At What Time Will This Event Occur?

VARIOUS INTERPRETATIONS

VARIOUS INTERPRETATIONS

Major Problem: What is the Meaning of Mal. 4:5?

Higher Critical View

Some commentators take the view that at least, these latter verses of Malachi were added by a "commentator" in the Greek period of history. With this interpretation of Scripture it is easy to understand why this prophecy is taken very lightly.

They see in this passage an apparent contradiction of Mal. 4:3:

"They (commentators) reopen a subject that was closed with v.3. Moreover, they apparently take a different view of the day from that presented in v. 1-3. There, no work of preparation seems to have been contemplated. The conditions on earth are well defined. Society falls into two classes, the godly and ungodly. All that is needed is the overthrow of the latter and the exaltation of the former. Here, all classes seem to be regarded as deserving destruction. A preliminary work of purification is needed in order to avert a total destruction on Yahweh's day. These verses probably reflect the conditions of a later age when Hellenistic influences had wrought profound changes throughout all Israel."¹

¹John Merlin Powis Smith, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Malachi, The International Critical Commentary, Eds. Samuel Rolles Driver, Alfred Plummer and Charles Augustus Briggs (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1912), Vol. I, 82.

This view may take many forms, but because of their relative unimportance they will not be discussed in this monograph. We will conclude the presentation of this view with these words of Dentan which will give us some idea of the form in which this view presents itself:

"The commentator presumably picked on Elijah because of the latter's ascension into heaven (II Kings 2:1-11), which would seem to make him available for this kind of mission. As a result of this bit of speculative exegesis, the figure Elijah came to have a considerable role to play in later Apocalyptic thought (Mark 6:5 - 9:4-11)"²

²Robert C. Dentan (exegesis). "Malachi," "The Interpreter's Bible", ed. Nolan B. Harmon (New York: Abingdon Press, 1956), p. 1143-1144

John The Baptist's View

The men who hold this view believe that John the Baptist completely fulfilled the prophecy of Mal. 4:5. It is their contention that the entire tradition of Elijah coming back in person arose from the fact that in the Septuagint the words of Malachi 4:5 read thus: "Behold, I will send you Ἡλίας τὸν Θεοβίτην," which denotes Elias in person, and cannot be applied to John the Baptist.

Gill comes nearest to stating this view in general terms when he says:

"Not the Tishbite, as the Septuagint version wrongly inserts instead of prophet: not Elijah in person, who lived in the times of Ahab, but John the Elijah, Luke 1:17."³

Thus we see that the stress of this view is on the word "prophet" and not Elijah, and therefore they can say with Adam Clarke:

"This is meant alone of John the Baptist as we learn from Luke 1:17, in whose spirit and power he came."⁴

As one can see from the two men already quoted

³John Gill, An Exposition of the Old Testament (London: William Hill Collingridge, 1854) IV, 894

⁴Adam Clarke, The Holy Bible (New York: Lane & Scott, 1850) IV, 808

the passage in the first chapter of Luke's Gospel is often used for this argument. Since it is a key passage, perhaps it would be best if we review the contents of Lk. 1:13-17.

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.

These men also believe in "progressive revelation" and give to that term the meaning that many things in the Old Testament are now brought to fuller light, so that we can understand now that Malachi really meant in 4:5 John the Baptist who is an antitype of Elijah. They point to the similarity of mind and manners, graces, gifts and offices of these two men.

"The Gospels hardly record a single sentence or speech employed by John the Baptist, the germ of which may not be found in the prophecy of Malachi the messenger."⁵

This view explains the denial of John the Baptist in John 1:21, "And they asked him, What then? Art thou

⁵J. Glentworth Butler, The Bible-Work (New York: The Butler Bible-Work Co., 1899) IX, 651

Elias? And he saith, I am not", as referring only to the personal sense of the term, that is, he was denying that he was Elijah literally.

"The pure sense of this prophecy, that an ideal Elijah should precede the Messiah, which John actually was (Luke 1:17; Matth. xi. 14; xvii. 10), had early become corrupted among the Jews, as shown by the very translation of the passage in the Septuagint...(Elijah the Tishbite). Thus these messengers understood the word entirely in a superstitious sense taking it literally for the actual Elijah. Hence John answers categorically: 'I am not' (not the Tishbite, whom you mean.) But he adds no explanation; for this would have involved him in an exegetical controversy, and turned him from his main object, which was to testify of Christ."⁶

Mt. 17:10-13 is also explained in such a way as to give the force that Elijah had come in John the Baptist. In Mt. 17:10-11 the disciples ask Jesus a question saying: "Why then say the scribes that Elias must first come?" "And Jesus answered and said unto them, Elias truly shall first come, and restore all things."

The holders of this view answer the problem usually in this way: they argue that this verb ἐρχεται "cometh" is futuristic present tense, but they hold that although in a future sense the prophecy is true which says that Elias shall first come, this has already been fulfilled in John the Baptist. They do not believe that the future tense means that there will be some other coming of Elijah still future to the time of Christ's first coming.

⁶John Peter Lange, "The Gospel According to John," Trans. Edward D. Yeomans and Evelina Moore. A Commentary on the Holy Scriptures, ed. Philip Schaff (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1915), XVIII, 84

This view on Mt. 17:11 is well set forth by Vincent:

"Cometh. Elijah cometh first. An abstract statement expressing the fact that Elijah's coming precedes in time the coming of the Messiah. It is a point of Jewish chronology; just as a teacher of history might say to his pupils, 'The Saxons and Gaiques precede the Normans in England.' Elijah had already come in the person of John the Baptist."⁷

Another view is presented by Makrakis:

"This is the coming Elias, who goes from one generation to another; for every preacher and teacher of true repentance is Elias who comes and continues the works of John the Baptist until the restoration of all the laws and institutions of the Church which are now trodden upon."⁸

Another argument for this view is that John is said by Jesus to represent Elijah to them, if they would receive him in Mt. 11:14: "And if ye will receive it, this is Elias which was for to come."

This is put forth by Robertson:

"This is Elijah (*autos estin Elias*) Jesus here endorses John as the promise of Malachi. The people understood Malachi 4:5 to mean the return of Elijah in person. This John denied as to himself (John 1:21). But Jesus affirms that John is the Elijah of promise who has come already (Matthew 17:12). He emphasized the point: "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear."⁹

It is obvious to all, I am sure, that this view

⁷Marvin R. Vincent, Word Studies in the New Testament, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1908) I, 101

⁸Apostolos Makrakis, Interpretation of the Entire New Testament, (Chicago: Orthodox Christian Educational Society, 1949), I, 315

⁹Archibald Thomas Robertson, Word Pictures in the New Testament, (New York: Richard R. Smith, Inc., 1930) I, 89

is upheld by all postmillennial commentators and by most amillennial commentators. In the case of the postmillennial, it is the only view that would fit their scheme of eschatology. Butler states it like this:

"The Baptist was the only 2nd Elijah promised to the Church, and we do not look for another. Why, indeed, should another come? He would have no work to do."¹⁰

It is, however, indeed strange to find a pre-millennial scholar such as Armerding holding this view.

He says:

"On the other hand we have seen that the ministry of John the Baptist so closely resembles the ministry of Elijah that we need not hesitate to say that John's coming was at least a fulfillment of that prophecy. But that it was more than a fulfillment also seems clear when we consider the fact that no reference is made to any such ministry in the Olivet Discourse where the day of the Lord and that which precedes it is in view. If there is to be another fulfillment of Malachi 4:5 it must come before that day. And finally, the fact that the Lord will come "suddenly", like lightning, seems to preclude all thought of any such ministry immediately preceding. Our Lord's next public appearance to this world will come without notice other than that which we now have in the written Word itself."¹¹

We have here presented two good arguments for this view:

1. The coming of Elijah in the future is never mentioned by Christ in His Olivet Discourse.
2. Elijah must come "before the great and dreadful day of the Lord" which is inconsistent with the fact that the "Lord shall come as a thief in the night."

¹⁰Butler, loc. cit.

¹¹Carl Armerding, "Will There be Another Elijah?" Bibliotheca Sacra, (Jan. - Mar. 1943), 6, 96

Armerding uses the following two additional arguments:

3. The established gap principle in Scripture is cited as proof. According to this view Malachi saw two widely separated events in his prophecy (4:5-6), but treated them as one. Thus John could fulfill the first portion at the first advent of Christ although the remainder must await Christ's second advent for its fulfillment.

4. The ministry of the two witnesses is to be a ministry of judgement, while that of Elijah is the turning of hearts, so that the chronology of Revelation four through nineteen has no mention of a ministry like Elijah's.

The John the Baptist view is held by a great majority of commentators, postmillennial and amillennial; and at least one premillennial.

Others who hold this view are: Benson,¹² Henry,¹³ Maclaren,¹⁴ Morgan,¹⁵ Pool,¹⁶ and Torshell.¹⁷

¹²Joseph Benson, The Holy Bible (New York: George Lane & Levi Scott, 1852), III, 1087.

¹³Matthew Henry, A Commentary on the Holy Bible (New York: Funk & Wagnalls), IV, 1520.

¹⁴Alexander Maclaren, Expositions of Holy Scriptures, "The Minor Prophets" (New York: George H. Doran Co.), p. 362.

¹⁵G. Campbell Morgan, Studies in Malachi (London: Morgan and Scott), p. 99.

¹⁶Matthew Pool, Annotations Upon the Holy Bible (New York: Robert Carter and Brothers), II, 1029.

¹⁷Samuel Torshell, A Commentary Upon the Prophecy of Malachi (London: James Nisbet & Co.), p. 302.

Spirit and Power View

The third major view is that the prophecy of Mal. 4:5 has not been completely fulfilled in John the Baptist and awaits a future fulfillment; but since Elijah personally is not required to fulfill them, one will come in his spirit and power to fulfill that which has been predicted.

English states on this question:

"Malachi's prophecy and our Lord's prediction have been cited. They are without error, of course. Bear in mind, however, that Elijah has come already! For John the Baptist came in the spirit and power of Elijah when he, John, appeared as Christ's fore-runner. In the same conversation with His disciples that has been quoted above, our Lord continued His reply to their question: 'Elias (Elijah) truly shall first come, and restore all things. 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 them. Then the disciples understood that He spake unto them of John the Baptist.' (Matthew 17:11-13). Still earlier the Lord Jesus had said, in speaking of John: 'If ye will receive it, this (John) is Elias (Elijah), which was for to come' (Matthew 11:14). Let us not forget that, when the angel spoke to Zacharias concerning John's birth, the heavenly visitor said: '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 be turned 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)

If, then, John the Baptist, coming 'in the spirit and power of Elias,' fulfilled in turning the hearts

of the fathers to the children and preparing the way of the Lord, the prediction of Malachi, so that our Lord said of him: 'Elias is come already,' is it necessary that one of the 'two witnesses' be a literal Elijah? Cannot the ministry be, rather, 'in the spirit and power of Elias,' as was John's ministry?¹⁸

Pentecost who holds to this view also quotes

English:

"And then the Lord added: 'For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. And if ye will receive it, this Elias, which was for to come' (Matthew 11:13-14). What did He mean? He was telling them this: that if Israel had been ready and willing to receive Him then, He would have established the Kingdom which He offered them, and that in that event, John's ministry would have been the fulfillment of the prophetic Elijah. It seems, therefore, that the prophecy of Malachi refers to one coming in the spirit and with the power of Elijah (as Luke 1:17). and that he will not need to be Elijah himself, literally . . . It seems that the Word of God clearly indicates that the one who comes will be a virtual rather than a literal Elijah.' . . . if John the Baptist could have been Elijah, had Israel been willing to receive it (Matthew 11:13-14), then those who will witness in that future day, coming in the spirit and power of Elijah, can assuredly fulfil the prophecies of Malachi and of our Lord (Mal 3:5; Matthew 17:10-11).¹⁹

This view can be summarized in this manner:

Since John could not have fulfilled the prophecy of Mal. 4:5 because the Jews refused to accept the offer of the kingdom, then the prophecy could not be now fulfilled.

On the other hand, since John could have fulfilled it, even though he was not personally Elijah, if the Jews would have

¹⁸E. Schuyler English, "The Revelation, Verse-by-Verse," Our Hope, (Waretaurs, N.J.: Arno C. Gaebelien, Publisher, 1954), LIX, (March 1954), 637

¹⁹J. Dwight Pentecost, Things to Come, (Findlay, O.: Dunham Pub. Co., 1958), p. 312

accepted the offer of the kingdom, it indicates that Elijah need not come personally to fulfill the prophecy.

This is the view that Elijah will come personally to minister again. This fourth major view is the interpretation that John does not fulfill the prophecy. The Lord anticipated a future ministry of Elijah (Mt. 17:12). Therefore, the Elijah of the Old Testament must minister again before Christ's second coming as he did ministered before His first coming.

This view has been well stated by Simcox when

"As to Elijah, there seems to be little doubt that this view is true. The prophecy of Malachi 4:5 has indeed received a fulfillment in the mission of the Baptist (Luke 1:17). But Matthew 17:12-13 perhaps implies that this fulfillment is not the final one - especially when compared with John 1:21.

Really the plain sense of these passages seems to be, that Elijah will actually be sent before the second coming of Christ, as he was in his spirit and power was before His first."²⁰

On the basis of the literal method of interpretation of the Scriptures, this view would understand the word of Scripture in the New Testament in this manner. It is not that we have not yet seen how this view is reconciled with the New Testament passages concerning Elijah. I will briefly state the passages and the interpretation.

²⁰ William Henry Simcox, The Revelation of St.

John. The Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges (Cambridge, Eng.: University Press, 1893), p. 69

Personal Elijah View

This is the view that Elijah will come personally and minister again. This fourth major view is the interpretation that John does not fulfill the prophecy and the Lord anticipated a future ministry of Elijah (Mt. 17:11). Therefore, the Elijah of the Old Testament must come and minister again before Christ's second coming as John the Baptist ministered before His first coming.

This view has been well stated by Simcox when he says:

"As to Elijah, there seems to be little doubt that this view is true. The prophecy of Malachi 4:5 has indeed received a fulfillment in the mission of the Baptist (Luke 1:17). But Matthew 17:11-12) perhaps implies that this fulfillment is not the final one - especially when compared with John 1:21.

Really the plain sense of these passages seems to be, that Elijah will actually be sent before the second coming of Christ, as one in his spirit and power was before His first."²⁰

On the basis of the literal method of interpreting the Scriptures, this view would understand the key passages of Scripture in the New Testament in this manner. In order that we may better understand how this view is able to reconcile the view with the New Testament passages concerning Elijah, I will briefly state the passage and the interpretation.

²⁰William Henry Simcox, The Revelation of St. John, The Cambridge Bible for Schools and College (Cambridge, Eng.: University Press, 1893), p. 69

In Lk. 1:17 John is not identified as Elijah, but as one who is to "go before him in the spirit and power of Elias," showing that John was not a literal Elijah and therefore must yet come.

John denied that he was Elijah (Jno. 1:21).

"When the Jews sent Priests and Levites from Jerusalem to John to ask him 'Who Art Thou?' he confessed, 'I AM NOT THE CHRIST.' And they asked him, 'What then? Art thou ELIJAH?' And he said, 'I AM NOT.' It is clear from John's answers to these questions that he was NOT ELIJAH."²¹

In Mt. 17:11 the word ἔρχεται "come" is present, but since coupled with the word ἀποκαταστήσει "shall restore", which is future, it must be interpreted as a futuristic present, so that the Lord is indicating a future ministry of Elijah.

"Whoever, in this answer of Christ, would explain away the manifest and striking confirmation of the fact, that a coming of Elias was yet to take place, must do great violence to the words; and must find it very hard to strain the future ἀποκαταστήσει πάντα, in its form and meaning, so as to make it applicable also to John the Baptist."²²

Some other arguments that support this view are:

The similarities in the ministries of the witnessed in Revelation 11 with these of Elijah argue for a future return of Elijah.

The historical argument is sometimes used that devout Jews are still looking for Elijah in the fulfill-

²¹Clarence Larkin, The Book of Revelation (n.p. Clarence Larkin Estate), p. 84

²²Rudolf Stier, The Words of the Lord Jesus (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark), II, 345

ment of the prophecy. Perhaps under this argument we may also include the great many church fathers who write concerning their belief that Elijah will return.

The last argument, and a very important argument, to show the contrast between the Personal Elijah view and the Spiritual Elijah view is the argument from the correct interpretation of the Kingdom offered in Mt. 11:14.

"When John from his prison cell sent messengers to Jesus to ask Him if He was the Christ, after Christ had dismissed those messengers He said to the multitude of John, 'IF YE WILL RECEIVE IT, THIS ELIJAH WHICH WAS FOR TO COME.' Matthew 11:14. . . The context shows that Jesus was talking about the 'KINGDOM' (Verses 11 and 12), and if they had received 'THE KINGDOM' that John instead of being John, would have been ELIJAH come back, but because God foresaw that the Jews would not receive the KINGDOM, He could not send ELIJAH at that time, so He had to send a substitute with the 'spirit' and 'power' of Elijah in his place, so He sent John the Baptist."²³

This view is held by many other writers, some of them being: Alford,²⁴ Burgh,²⁵ Krummacher,²⁶ Newell,²⁷

²³Larkin, loc. cit.

²⁴Henry Alford, The New Testament for English Readers (London: Deighton, Bell and Co., 1872), I, 124

²⁵William Burgh, An Exposition of the Book of Revelation (Dublin: Richard Moore Tims), pp. 210-220.

²⁶F. W. Krummacher, Elijah the Tishbite (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Pub. House, n.d.), p. 280

²⁷William R. Newell, The Book of the Revelation (Chicago: The Scripture Press, 1935), pp. 150-160

Deane,²⁸ Olshausen,²⁹ Seiss,³⁰ and William.³¹

The author of this paper also holds to this view. In the following pages will be found an explanation and proof as to why this interpretation is the correct one.

²⁸W. J. Deane (exposition), "Malachi," The Pulpit Commentary, eds. H. D. M. Spence and Joseph S. Exell (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., reprinted 1950), XIV, 61.

²⁹Hermann Olshausen, Biblical Commentary on the New Testament, trans. A. C. Kendrick (New York: Sheldon, Blakeman & Co., 1856) I, 563

³⁰J. A. Seiss, The Apocalypse (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Pub. House, reprinted 1957), p. 244

³¹Lukyn A. Williams (exposition), "Matthew," The Pulpit Commentary (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1950), XV, 175

Minor Problem: At What Time Will This Event Occur?

The Old Testament closes with the announcement of Elijah, Jehovah's messenger, who will come "before the great and dreadful day of the Lord." Therefore, it is apparent that the key to determine when Elijah shall return is the phrase, "before the great and dreadful day of the Lord". If we can determine when this "Day of the Lord" is to start and how long it will last, we will have a much fuller understanding of the prophecy in Mal.

4:5. It found in Joel 1:1-31. The day (ch. iii 17, iv

1-3) throughout has the same meaning. It refers especially to the destruction of Jerusalem.³²

Rail explains this view more fully:

"... The day of the Lord, which they announce as the day of judgment, commenced with the appearance on earth of Christ, the incarnate Logos; and Christ Himself declared that He had come into the world for judgment (John ix 39, cf. iii 19 & xii 48), viz for the judgment of separating the believers from the ungodly, to give eternal life to those who believe on His name, and to bring death and condemnation to unbelievers. This judgment burst upon the Jewish nation not long after the ascension of Christ. Israel rejected its Saviour, and was smitten with the ban at the Destruction of Jerusalem in the Roman war and both people and land lie under this ban to the present day. And just as the judgment commenced at that time so far as Israel was concerned, so does it also begin in relation to all peoples and kingdoms of this earth with the first preaching of Christ among them and will continue throughout all the centuries during which the kingdom spreads upon earth, until it

³² John Peter Lange, "Malachi," trans. & ed. Philip W. W. A Commentary on the Holy Scriptures (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1907), XIV, 27

shall be ultimately completed in the universal
 Destruction of Jerusalem View of the Lord
 at the last day.³²

For the purpose of brevity, I will attempt to class all amillennial and postmillennial interpretations into this view, for they are essentially the same.

Because of their eschatological scheme they must separate "The great and dreadful day of the Lord" from the "last day".^{36 and Scott, 37}

Lange says on this subject:

"This expression, the "great and terrible day" is found in Joel ii 31. The day (ch. iii 17, iv 1-5) throughout has the same meaning. It refers especially to the destruction of Jerusalem."³²

Keil explains this view more fully:

". . . The day of the Lord, which they announce as the day of judgment, commenced with the appearance on earth of Christ, the incarnate Logos; and Christ Himself declared that He had come into the world for judgment (John ix 39, cf. iii 19 & xii 40), viz for the judgment of separating the believers from the ungodly, to give eternal life to those who believe on His name, and to bring death and condemnation to unbelievers. This judgment burst upon the Jewish nation not long after the ascension of Christ. Israel rejected its Saviour, and was smitten with the ban at the Destruction of Jerusalem in the Roman war; and both people and land lie under this ban to the present day. And just as the judgment commenced at that time so far as Israel was concerned, so does it also begin in relation to all peoples and kingdoms of this earth with the first preaching of Christ among them and will continue throughout all the centuries during which the kingdom spreads upon earth, until it

³²John Peter Lange, "Malachi," trans. & ed. Philip Schaff, A Commentary on the Holy Scriptures (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1907), XIV, 27

shall be ultimately completed in the universal judgment at the visible second coming of the Lord at the last day."³³

Therefore, under this view the "great and dreadful day of the Lord" would refer to the judgment of Israel in 70 A.D. when the Romans armies destroyed Jerusalem and its temple.

Others who hold to this view are Henderson,³⁴ Laetsch,³⁵ Pool³⁶ and Scott.³⁷

Scott's Reference Bible.

"The day of Jehovah (called, also, 'that day', and 'the great day') is that lengthened period of time beginning with the return of the Lord in glory and ending with the purgation of the heavens and the earth by fire preparatory to the new heavens and new earth (Isa. 65:17-19; 66:22; II Pet. 3:13; Rev. 2:1)."³⁸

Under this viewpoint, the Day of the Lord begins with the tribulation. Therefore, according to this view

the Day of the Lord covers that time period from the re-

³³Carl Friedrich Keil, Vol. II of The Twelve Minor Prophets, Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament, (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., reprinted 1951) 47

³⁴E. Henderson, The Book of the Twelve Minor Prophets, (London: Hamilton, Adams & Co.), p. 463

³⁵Theodore Laetsch, The Minor Prophets, (St. Louis: Concordia Pub. House, 1956), p. 190

³⁶Pool, loc. cit.

³⁷Thomas Scott, The Holy Bible, (Boston: Samuel T. Armstrong, 1831), IV, 904

Second Advent View

The time areas of the "Day of the Lord" has been a matter of much debate among premillennial commentators of the Scripture. There are, however, two major interpretations of this question worthy of consideration. The older premillennialists such as Darby and the Plymouth Brethren writers in general identified the Day of the Lord with the millennium and placed its beginning at the return of Christ to establish His earthly kingdom, an interpretation which was later popularized by the Scofield Reference Bible.

"The day of Jehovah (called, also, "that day", and "the great day") is that lengthened period of time beginning with the return of the Lord in glory and ending with the purgation of the heavens and the earth by fire preparatory to the new heavens and new earth (Isa. 65:17-19; 66:22; II Pet. 3:13; Rev. 2:1)"³⁸

Under this viewpoint, the Day of the Lord begins after the tribulation. Therefore, according to this view the day of the Lord covers that time period from the return of Christ to the earth to the new heaven and the new earth after the millennium period.

Therefore, the holders of this view would say the "great and dreadful day of the Lord" is the first day or beginning day, of the period known as the day of the Lord, "the great and dreadful day of the Lord", then is

³⁸C. I. Scofield, The Scofield Reference Bible, (New York: Oxford University Press), p. 1349

the day of Christ's second advent.

Armerding, quoted earlier in this monograph, also holds this view.³⁹

³⁹Armerding, op. cit., p. 89

Rapture View

The other major premillennial view is expressed by Ironside quoted by Pentecost:

"When at last the day of grace is ended the day of the Lord will succeed it . . . The day of the Lord follows (the rapture). It will be the time when the judgments of God are poured out upon the earth. It includes the descent of the Lord with all His Saints to execute judgment on His foes and to take possession of the kingdom . . . and to reign in righteousness for a thousand glorious years."⁴⁰

This view is the same as the older premillennial view as to the time when the day ends, but begins the Day of the Lord with the tribulation period so that the events of the tribulation, the second advent, and the millennium are all included within the scope of the day of the Lord.

This view I have termed the "rapture view" because the view holds that the period known as the day of the Lord begins with the rapture of the Church. However, it should be noted that whereas the title given to the other two views denotes the day specifically described by the descriptive adjectives "great and dreadful" the title "rapture view" does not.

This view maintains rather, that the term "Day of the Lord" refers to the whole period of time from the Rapture to the New Heaven and New Earth, and that the "great and dreadful day" is one particular day during

⁴⁰Pentecost, op. cit., pp. 229-230

the general period called "the day of the Lord." Thus, this view is similar to the "second advent" view in that they both agree that "the great and dreadful day of the Lord" is the day of Christ's second advent.

The writer of this monograph holds to this view along with Chafer,⁴¹ McClain,⁴² Pentecost,⁴³ Strombeck,⁴⁴ and Walvoord.⁴⁵

⁴¹Lewis Sperry Chafer, Systematic Theology, (Dallas: Dallas Seminary Press, 1948), VII, 110

⁴²Alva J. McClain, The Greatness of the Kingdom, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Pub. House), p. 179

⁴³Pentecost, op. cit., p. 174

⁴⁴J. F. Strombeck, First the Rapture, (Moline, Ill: Strombeck Agency, Inc., 1950), pp. 50-53

⁴⁵John F. Walvoord, "Premillennialism and the Tribulation", Bibliotheca Sacra, (Dallas, Tex: Dallas Theological Seminary), CXIII, (1956) p. 9

Minor Problem: When Will This Event Occur?

The problem under consideration is: when will the event known as the "day of the Lord" or more specifically the "great and dreadful day of the Lord" occur. Has this event already taken place in 70 A.D. at the destruction of Jerusalem, or on the other hand, is it still future being either the beginning of the Day of the Lord at the second advent of Christ or a specific day in the period known as the Day of the Lord.

There are few prophetic subjects about which there seems to be more confusion than the "Day of the Lord". However, in general we can say that the view taken of the Day of the Lord is formed from preconceived ideas of eschatology. That is, a commentator will base his view of the Day of the Lord upon his particular doctrinal prejudices; for example a commentator who is postmillennial in his views will undoubtedly place the great and dreadful day of the Lord shortly after the first advent of Christ.

It is not the purpose of the writer of this monograph to try to refute the entire postmillennial and amillennial point of view concerning the "Day of the Lord", because in order to accomplish this, I would of

necessity have to refute their whole eschatological position.

However, one glaring error ought to be pointed out in regard to the postmillennial and amillennial interpretations of the day of the Lord. They do not use a literal interpretation of Scripture, which, of course, we affirm to be the only safe way to approach the Scriptures.

As has already been pointed out in this problem, Lange, a chief exponent of the Destruction of Jerusalem view, says that the expressions "great and dreadful day of the Lord" is taken from Joel 2:31. He goes on to affirm that these passages both refer to the destruction of Jerusalem as he is forced to do by his own conclusions.

Joel 2:30-32 reads:

"And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the Lord come. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered, for in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the Lord hath said, and in the remnant whom the Lord shall call."

It is obvious, that if we take the Word of God seriously, then these events mentioned have not yet taken place. In the destruction of Jerusalem view these events must be taken figuratively of the terrible destruction of Jerusalem. This view, therefore, we cannot accept.

We have yet to discuss two major premillennial views: the "second advent" view and the "rapture view".

In either view the "great and dreadful day of the Lord" turns out to be the second advent of Christ. But in order that we may have a better understanding of the major problem of this monograph, it will be helpful for us to consider here the differences in these two views. It should be also stated that I will only present the problem as briefly as possible, and express the opinion of the writer as to the correct interpretation, which was formulated while writing a research paper entitled "The Day of the Lord" for Zechariah class under Dr. Whitcomb.

I would first like to point out that a study of the Day of the Lord in Scripture reveals that the idea of judgment is paramount in all of the passages. This is clearly brought out in Zep. 1:14-15:

"The great day of the Lord is near, it is near, and hasteth greatly, even the voice of the day of the Lord: the mighty man shall cry there bitterly. That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of waste-ness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness, . . . etc."

This judgment includes not only the specific judgments upon Israel and the nations at the end of the tribulation that are along with the second advent, but, from a careful study of this passage and the various other passages, I conclude that the day of the Lord includes judgments that extend over a period of time prior to the second advent. Thus, I conclude that the Day of the Lord will include the time of the tribulation.

The second advent view, affirms that the Day of

the Lord begins after the tribulation. These writers are therefore hard pressed to explain how the Day of the Lord could be an event which will come unexpectedly and unannounced, because it would be preceded by such events as the great tribulation and other notable signs. This presents a real objection to this view for 2 Pet. 3:10 and 1 Th. 5:2 say:

"But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night: in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up."

"For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night."

Therefore, this view jeopardizes the premillennial teaching that the translation of the Church is to be an event unheralded and imminent. Such passages as I Thessalonians 5, discussing the Day of the Lord, seem to be connected with the translation of the Church in the preceding verses (1 Th. 4:13-18).

The main objection to the rapture view is that certain things that we know belong to the tribulation period are said by Old Testament writers to happen before the day of the Lord. For example: Joel 2:30-31 (already quoted) are certainly events of the tribulation period.

It is true that these events will come before the great and dreadful day of the Lord. It should, however, be noted that the Day of the Lord may refer either to the entire period encompassed by that phrase, that is, from the beginning of the seventieth week of Daniel through

the millennial age or it may refer to any of the events of that entire period under that name.

"The contexts of the various passages give no justification whatever for making the word day a technical work meaning in every instance the day of the second advent. Far more reasonable is the approach which takes every instance according to its context, recognizing that the word day is a general word made specific only by the context in which it occurs. The "day" in view, accordingly, is the day pictured by each passage--in some instances an event occurring in a specific period compared to a twenty four hour day, as in the day of judgment of Christians (I Cor. 3:13; 2 Tim. 4:8). In other instances it is the Day of the Lord, a period including the entire millennial reign of Christ."¹

The problem left unsolved by the second advent view in this interpretation of the day of the Lord has a very simple solution which at once helps us greatly in determining when the return of Elijah the prophet will take place. The day of the Lord as presented in the Old and New Testament includes rather than follows the tremendous events of the tribulation period. We have given evidence that the Day of the Lord begins at once at the time of the rapture of the Church (1 Th. 5:2). The same event which translates the Church begins the Day of the Lord, and then the various events of the period known as the day of the Lord begin to unfold.

Thus, it is not necessary to hold that Elijah will appear during the Church age while holding to the "rapture view", because it will happen "before the great

¹Walvoord, loc. cit.

and dreadful day of the Lord". We may, therefore, hold the "rapture view" and firmly believe that Elijah shall come sometime during the tribulation period.

As a matter of fact, we can safely say that Elijah must appear within the seven year period of the tribulation. First of all, he must appear after the rapture of the Church, for that is the time of the beginning of the Day of the Lord. He must also appear before "the great and dreadful day of the Lord" which the descriptive adjectives, "great and dreadful", seem best to fit the second advent of Christ.

Major Problem: What is the Meaning of Mal. 4:5?

It is the belief of the writer that a "good offense is the best defense," therefore in the following arguments the writer shall try to uphold the interpretation which he holds to be right interpretation, namely, Personal Elijah View. The arguments presented will be for the twofold purpose of (1) refuting the opposing views and (2) to prove that the view of the writer is the right interpretation.

Argument from John 1:21

I think it is obvious from Scripture that John the Baptist came discharging the office of Elijah as a herald or fore-runner of the Messiah preaching the message of repentance.

John came preaching the kingdom of God, which he did in the office of Elijah who had been sent before the Messiah. The fore-runner of the Messiah was present. The immediate establishment of the kingdom depended upon the attitude of the nation of Israel. If they would receive John he would become to them the official fore-runner with the authority to present the Messiah and he (Messiah) in turn to establish the kingdom.

The Jews of Christ's time and even the Orthodox Jews of today have a saying like this: "let it be left until Elias comes;"² thus the reason for the question in Jno. 1:21, "What then, Art thou Elias?" In the context of this verse, the Jews from Jerusalem sent priests and Levites to John to ask him the simple question of who he was. If John's claims were true then he must be Elijah. However, in answer to the all important question John said, "I am not." That is he was not Elijah in the sense in which they had expected him to be. He was not Elijah the Tishbite brought back from the place of departed spirits.

²Gill, op. cit. p. 158

John would not, however, have denied that he was executing the office of Elijah in the "spirit and power of Elijah". This negative answer should not have confused them, for John went on to explain in verse 23 "I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias." These words are almost identical to those in the fortieth chapter of Isaiah. *Life was given. Then an angel of the*

Therefore, we see that in one sense John was Elijah which had been predicted by the prophet Malachi, but in another sense, by his own confession (Jno. 1:21) he was not. For the prophecy of Mal. 4:5 awaits a second and more literal fulfillment; and as the typical Elijah came before Christ's first advent, so shall literal Elijah come before His second advent and "shall restore all things." (Mt. 17:10-13).

And then, shall he, shall be called the prophet of the Highways for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways; 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." (Luk. 1:76-79).

References to John's ministry and the fulfillment of these prophecies, at least in a sense, are found in the New Testament records. From these records we learn how John actually did turn the hearts of men from darkness to light, from hypocrisy, selfishness, and violence to repentance. Perhaps it can be said that this was the outstanding feature of John's ministry. John began

Argument from Luke 1:17

After the great prophecy of the coming Elijah, (Mal. 4:5) we have in the opening chapter of Luke's Gospel what seems to be the earliest reference to the passage in New Testament Scripture. The birth of John the Baptist had been announced, and a brief description of his Spirit-filled life was given. Then an angel of the Lord describes the ministry of John the Baptist to his father, saying to Zacharias:

"And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God. And he shall go before im 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." (Lk. 1:16-17)

Soon after John was born, Zacharias under the guidance of the Holy Spirit said of his son:

"And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways; to give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins, through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring 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." (Lk. 1:76-79).

References to John's ministry and the fulfillment of these prophecies, at least in a sense, are found in all four of the Gospel records. From these records we learn how John actually did turn the hearts of men of all classes from hypocrisy, selfishness, and violence to repentance. Perhaps it can be said that this was the outstanding feature of John's ministry. John began

preaching by saying "Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." (Mt. 3:2). He also came "preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins." (Lk. 3:3). He demanded of those who came to be baptized that they have "fruits worthy of repentance." (Mt. 3:8). Thus, in a sense he did turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God, and the hearts of the fathers to children.

However, certainly we cannot conclude from this verse that John the Baptist completely fulfilled the prophecy concerning Elijah in Mal. 4:5-6 as Clarke does.

"This is meant alone of John the Baptist as we learn from Luke 1:17, in whose spirit and power he came."³

The prophecy had a first fulfillment in John, who went before the Messiah to be His forerunner. But it seems obvious that He will send Elijah prior to the second advent of Christ, as He sent John the Baptist in the spirit and power of Elijah prior to His first advent to warn sinners of the wrath to come.

There was a twofold ministry embraced in the ancient promise to send Elijah, just as there was a twofold advent in the predictions concerning the Messiah. In neither case did the Old Testament clearly distinguish between these two, but viewed them both as if they were but one. And as the two Messiah-comings are widely separated in time, and though belonging to one and the same work; so there are two Elijah-comings, equally separated in time, and equally comprehended in the predictions. Hence, John, as the fore-runner of Christ in the first advent, was Elias; that is, he filled the Elijah

³Clarke, loc. cit.

place, operated in the Elijah spirit and energy, did for that occasion the Elijah work, and so far fulfilled the Elijah promise. As the angel said of him before he was born, he went before Christ 'in the spirit and power of Elias' (Luke 1:15-17); which implies that he was not Elias himself. The Saviour could, therefore, truly say of him while living, 'If ye will receive it, this is Elias which was for to come'; and so likewise after he was dead, 'Elias is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed.' John the Baptist operated in the spirit and energy of Elias, and performed the Elijah mission for the first advent, and so far 'was Elias,' but, according to the word of the angel, only the virtual, and not the literal Elias. He could accordingly answer the Jews, who had in mind the literal Elias, that he was not Elias, while yet, in another respect, he was Elias. In him the prediction in Malachi concerning the sending of Elijah had a true and real fulfillment, but only a partial, germinant, preliminary fulfillment, whilst the highest and ultimate fulfillment respects another advent of Messiah, and the coming of the literal Elijah as the herald of it."⁴

With this view of Seiss, I am in agreement.

John the Baptist himself testified that he was not the literal Elijah (Jno. 1:21). In Lk. 1:17 we learn that John the Baptist did fulfill the Malachi prophecy, inasmuch as he came as a herald of Messiah's first advent "in the spirit and power" of Elijah. Yet, considering both the nature of the Old Testament prophecy which often fails to distinguish between various fulfillments of the prophecy, and the fact that John did not completely fulfill all the conditions and requirements of the Malachi prophecy, we look for a second and more literal fulfillment before the second advent of Christ.

⁴Seiss, op. cit., p. 248

Argument from Matthew 17:11

In the context of this verse Christ selects three of His disciples, Peter, James and John and takes them into a high mountain apart from the multitudes. And there on this mount Christ is transfigured before them. At the same instant Elijah and Moses appeared and spoke with the Lord. The disciples saw Elijah and knew him. And, as they were coming down from the mount, they ask the Lord concerning a saying of the Jewish scribes, "why then say the scribes that Elias must first come?" This question might well have been asked by us had we been there. You see they wanted to know where Elijah was if Jesus was truly the Messiah and about to come into His kingdom. They had just seen Elijah for a moment but surely this could not be the fulfillment to the prophecy in Mal. 4:5. And He answered and said unto them, "Elias truly shall first come and restore all things." (Mt. 17:11).

The problem, however, arises, not so much from verse eleven as from verses twelve and thirteen, which seems to contradict Christ's previous statement. "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 spoke unto them of John the Baptist. (Mt. 17:12-13).

Now, in order to have all these verses refer to

John the Baptist verse twelve must be regarded as simply a correction of verse ten. This is the view of Lenski⁵ and Bruce⁶ and most other interpreters who hold to John the Baptist view.

This interpretation is only necessary, however, if you have the preconceived idea that John the Baptist completely fulfilled the Malachi prophecy concerning Elijah. If you are not prejudiced in this matter it seems better to take the answer of Jesus to his disciples, "Elias truly shall come first and restore all things" to be a reference to His second coming when truly Elijah in person will come "before the great and dreadful day of the Lord." Therefore, when Jesus said that "Elias is come already" he was not contradicting Himself but reminding the disciples that John the Baptist had come in the "spirit and power of Elijah" in order that a bona-fide offer of the kingdom might be made, but the nation of Israel refused to accept John and the offered kingdom. For we must remember that Jesus said in Matthew 11:14, "and if ye will receive it, this is Elias which was for to come."

Alford says on verse eleven:

"Our Lord speaks here plainly in the future, and uses the very word of the prophecy Malachi iv 6.

⁵R. C. H. Lenski, The Interpretation of St. Matthew's Gospel, (Columbus, O.: The Wartburg Press, 1943), p. 633

⁶Alexander Balmain Bruce, The Synoptic Gospels, The Expositor's Greek Testament (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1951), p. 231.

the double allusion is only the assertion that the Elias (in spirit and power) who fore-ran our Lord's first coming was a partial fulfillment of the great prophecy which announces the real Elias (the words of Malachi will hardly bear any other than a personal meaning), who is to fore-run His greater and second coming.⁷

"Elias truly shall first come, and restore all things" cannot refer to John the Baptist. The word translated come here is ἔρχεται, which is indeed in the present tense, and might be translated cometh, or is coming, which would still never allow the application to John, whose whole career was at this time in the past; but it is a well-known rule of Greek grammar to use the present tense when it is meant to emphasize the certainty of something still future. Also this "futuristic" use of the present tense represents the thing in contemplation as actually commenced already.

Dana and Mantey tell, in regard to this form of verb:

"The Futuristic Present. This use of the present tense denotes an event which has not yet occurred, but which is regarded as so certain that in thought it may be contemplated as already coming to pass.
ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου παραδίδοται εἰς τὸ σταυρωθῆναι.
The Son of man is delivered to be crucified. Matthew 26:2.

While the present is thus used 'in appearance for the future,' it is in reality retains its own temporal and essential force, being employed to denote a future action 'either because it is already firmly resolved upon or because it follows because of some unalterable law.'⁸

⁷Alford, loc. cit.

⁸H. E. Dana and Julius R. Mantey, A Manual Grammar of the Greek New Testament, (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1943), p. 185

And furthermore, in the next clause, ἀποκατα-
στῆσει, which describes the work of the coming of
Elijah, is in the future, and can by no means be applied
to the work of John, which was by now entirely in the
past. This restoring of all things in which Elijah is
to take part is specifically referred by the Apostle
Peter to the time of Christ's second coming. "And he
shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto
you: 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."
(Ac. 3:20-21). After the study of these Greek terms, we
must conclude that this solemn declaration of the Saviour
in Mt. 17:11 looks to the future. And to say that Christ
was here speaking of John the Baptist is impossible un-
less, of course, he is to come again.

One more thing ought to be pointed out from the
Greek text.

"The apodosis (μεν, δε) in the passage
is not between the two affirmations as to the truth
of one and the falsity of the other, for both are
given as true. There is no limitation or negation
of the first clause by what is said in the second;
but the distinction indicated is, that one contem-
plates the Elias in one sense of the promise, i.e.,
literally and the other in another sense, i.e., fig-
uratively; neither being at all inconsistent with
the other. "Jesus answered and said unto them, Elias
(μεν, on the one hand, in one respect) is coming
first, and shall restore all things; (δε on the
other hand, in another respect,) I say unto you that
Elias, is come already, and they knew him not."⁹

⁹Seiss, op. cit., pp. 247-248

Therefore, our Lord's answer, (Elias truly shall first come, and restore all things. But I say unto you, that Elias is come already, and they knew him not etc.") does not hint that the scribes were wrong in expecting a literal Elijah, but rather He is hinting that the prophecy of Malachi should have a double fulfillment. He asserts in this one clause the partial fulfillment already completed and the literal accomplishment in the future.

"Jesus declares the opinion of the scribes concerning the coming of Elias in person, according to Malachi 4:5, to be wholly correct, and defines the kind of labors in which he is to be engaged; but intimates that one had already exercised for Him this office, one whom the scribes had put to death, one who had wrought in the spirit and power of Elias."¹⁰

No clearer explanation could have been given on this subject by our Lord. John had already come presenting himself to the Jewish nation in the office of Elijah, as the fore-runner of the Messiah. Because they did not accept John and his message and did unto him whatsoever they listed, Elijah the Tishbite will come in the future and restore all things as spoken by the prophet Malachi, at which time nothing will be able to interfere.

¹⁰Olshausen, loc. cit.

On the contrary it is necessary to place the
 Argument from the Day of the Lord

Malachi: It is said that Elijah will come "before the great and dreadful day of the Lord." It has already been established in this monograph that the "great and dreadful day of the Lord" is the day of Christ's second advent, and that this particular day is the climatic day of the period known as the "Day of the Lord" which extends from the beginning of Daniel's seventieth week to the establishing of the new heaven and new earth.

Because of these conclusions, we cannot agree with Armerding when he says, "The prophet was to be sent before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. Therefore, he must come before the Tribulation." It is true indeed that Elijah will come before the "great and dreadful day of the Lord." It should, however, be noted once again that the Day of the Lord may either refer to the entire period meant by that phrase or it may refer to any of the events of that period under that name. Thus it is not necessary to hold that Elijah will appear during the church age because he will appear "before" the Day of the Lord. But rather the Malachi passage teaches that Elijah in person will appear before the awful judgments descend just prior to and in connection with the second advent, which is an event of the day of the Lord. Therefore, the descriptive adjectives "great and dreadful" must relate this prophecy to that very thing.

On the contrary it is necessary to place the prophecy of the coming of Elijah the Tishbite in the tribulation period. The words of Mal. 4:5 must be accomplished in the period between the rapture of the Church and the end of Christ's Millennial reign for that is the entire period of the Day of the Lord. An Elijah must come before the second coming of Christ to earth which is the great and dreadful day of the Lord. Therefore, there is substantial evidence that Elijah will come sometime during the tribulation period.

Argument from History

From the time of the translation of the Septuagint version down to the time of the Protestant Reformation under Martin Luther, there was almost universal agreement among scholars Jewish and Christian that Elijah the Tishbite would come. It is very important to note some of the Jewish writings which contain this belief.

"We accordingly find that the book of Ecclesiasticus (which the Roman Catholic Church receives as inspired, and which the fathers and Reformers highly honoured, and which Protestants often have bound in their Bibles between the Old and New Testament) eulogizes Elijah and says, that he is anointed by God's order to appear again in the world, to rebuke evil, declare the impending judgment, reconcile the children of Jacob, rescue many, and make the way for the great and terrible day then about to break. (Chap. 48:1-11). Hence also the ancient Jewish believers up to the time of Christ, as all strict Jews since, looked for the appearance of Elijah in the flesh as the herald of victorious Messiah. Arnold (in Ecclesiasticus 48:10) says: "It was the unanimous sense of the Jews, that Elias should first come himself in person before the Messiah, and restore all things."¹¹

In fact, this belief was so strong in the Jewish mind that it continues to the present day.

"Indeed, the Jewish belief in the literal appearance of Elias as the herald of the Messiah was universal, and so universal does it continue to the hour, even after the lapse of eighteen centuries, the Jews at their marriage feasts always place a chair for him at their passover feat, at which the time they more especially look for him."...Armageddon, vol. i, p. 131.

"In the celebration of the Passover two large cups are filled with wine. One of these is taken by the master of the house, and a blessing pronounced.

¹¹Seiss, op. cit., p. 246

After the blessing the head of the family gives the cup to all those sitting around. He then brings forth the hidden cake, and distributes a piece to each. The second cup of wine, called 'Elijah's cup' is then placed before him; the door is opened, and a solemn pause of expectation ensues. It is at this moment that the Jews expect that the coming of Elijah will take place to announce the glad tidings that the Messiah is at hand. Well do I remember the interest with which, when a boy, I looked towards the door, hoping that Elijah might really enter; for, notwithstanding the disappointment year after year, his arrival is still confidently expected."¹²

Many commentators of the Scripture teach that this was a mistake, a false Jewish notion. But we have no right to thus judge the holiest saints from Malachi to Christ who made this the theme of many of their songs and prayers. Of course, we agree that the Jews did have many false notions developed in their traditions, but this one is firmly based on the only Scripture they had in their possession, therefore, we need to be more careful in our appraisal of this testimony. This testimony is not conclusive in itself but is just one more of the many evidences that Elijah the Tishbite will return.

Another line of historical evidence for the return of Elijah is found in the writings of the Church Fathers.

Justin Martyr asked his opponent Trypho:

"Shall we not conceive that the Word of God has proclaimed Elias to be the fore-runner of the great and terrible day of His second coming?" "Certainly," was Trypho's reply. So Justin continues, "Our Lord Himself taught us in His own teaching that this very

¹²Ibid. Cited from Herschell

thing shall be, when He said that Elias also shall come; and we know that this shall be fulfilled when He is about to come from Heaven in glory."¹³

Tertullian says:

"Elias is to come again, not after a departure from life, but after a translation; not to be restored to the body, from which he was taken; but to be restored to the world, from which he was translated; not by way of restoration to the world from which he was translated; not by way of restoration to life, but for the completion of prophecy; one and the same in name and in person."¹⁴

Origen says:

"Simply in one place, that the Saviour answered the question as to the objection of the Scribes, not annulling what had been handed down concerning Elias, but affirming that there was another coming of Elias before Christ, unknown to the scribes, according to which, not knowing him, and, being in a manner, accomplices in his being cast into prison by Herod and slain by him, they had done to him what they listed."¹⁵

Hippolytus records:

"As two Comings of our Lord and Saviour were indicated by the Scriptures, the first in the flesh in dishonor, that He might be set at nought--the second in glory, when He shall come from Heaven with the heavenly host and the glory of the Father--so two fore-runners were pointed out, the first, John, the son of Zacharias, and again--since He is manifested as Judge at the end of the world, His fore-runner must first appear, as He says through Malachi I will send to you Elias the Tishbite before the great and terrible day of the Lord shall come."¹⁶

Ambrose says:

"Because the Lord was to come down from heaven, and to ascend to heaven, He raised Elias to heaven, to bring him back to the earth at the time he should please." "The beast, Antichrist, ascends from the

¹³E. B. Pusey, The Minor Prophets, (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1885), II, 499

¹⁴Ibid., pp. 499,500

¹⁵Ibid., p. 500

¹⁶Ibid.

abyss to fight against Elias and Enoch, and John, who are restored to the earth for the testimony of the Lord Jesus, as we read in the Apocalypse of John."¹⁷

Jerome says:

"Some think that John is therefore called Elias, because as, according to Malachi, at the second Coming of the Saviour, Elias will precede and announce the Judge to come, so did John at His first Coming, and each is a messenger, of the first or second coming of the Lord . . . He who is to come in the second Coming of the Saviour in the actual body, now comes through John in spirit and power; . . . the two witness in the Revelation, since, according to the Apocalypse of John, Enoch and Elias are spoken of, as having to die."¹⁸

Chrysostom:

"When He saith that Elias cometh and shall restore all things, He means Elias himself, and the conversion of the Jews, which shall then be; but when He saith, which was to come, He calls John, Elias, according to the manner of his ministry."¹⁹

Augustine:

"When he (Malachi) had admonished them to remember the law of Moses, because he foresaw, that they would for a long time not receive it spiritually, as it ought, he added forthwith; 'And I will send you Elias the Tishbite etc.' That when, through this Elias, the great and wonderful prophet, at the last time before the judgment, the law shall have been expounded to them, the Jews shall believe in the true Christ . . . For he was carried in a chariot of fire from things below; which Scripture most evidently attests. When he shall come then, by expounding the law spiritually, which the Jews now understand carnally, he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children."²⁰

Cyril of Alexandria:

"It is demonstrative of the gentleness and long-suffering of God, that Elias also the Tishbite shall shine upon us, to foreannounce when the Judge shall come to those in the whole world.

The blessed Baptist John came before Him 'in the spirit and power of Elias.' But, as he preached saying, 'Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make His paths straight,' so also the divine Elias proclaims His then being near and all-but-present, that He may 'judge the world in righteousness.'²¹

Theodoret of Mopsuestra:

"Malachi teaches us how, when Antichrist shall presume on these things, the great Elias shall appear, preaching to the Jews the Coming of Christ: and he shall convert many, for this is the meaning of, 'he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children.'²²

Isidore of Seville (595):

"Elias, borne in a chariot of fire, ascended to heaven to come according to the prophet Malachi at the end of the world, and to precede Christ to announce His last Coming, with great deeds and wondrous signs, so that, on earth too, Antichrist will war against him, be against him or him who is to come with him, and will slay them; their bodies also will lie unburied in the streets. Then, raised by the Lord, they will smite the kingdom of Antichrist with a great blow . . . This will be in the last times, when, on the preaching of Elias, Judah will be converted to Christ."²³

Gregory the Great:

"It is promised, that when Elias shall come, he shall bring back the hearts of the sons to their fathers, that the doctrine of the old, which is now taken from the hearts of the Jews, may, in the mercy of God, return, when the sons shall begin to understand of the Lord God, what the fathers taught. Although Elias is related to have been carried to heaven and deferred, he did not escape, death. For it is said of him by the mouth of the Truth Himself, 'Elias shall come and restore all things', for to this end is he restored to this world, that he may both fulfill the office of preaching and pay the debt of the flesh. . . John is spoken of as to come in the spirit and power of Elias, because, as Elias shall precede the second Coming of the Lord, so John preceded His first. . . John then was Elias in spirit, he was not Elias in person. When then the Lord aye as to spirit, that John denies as to the person."²⁴

²¹Ibid.

²²Ibid.

²³Ibid., p. 502

²⁴Ibid.

This belief that Elijah must return before the great judgments of the Second Coming, as seen in these typical quotes from some of the Church Fathers, was universally accepted up to the time of Martin Luther and John Calvin in the sixteenth century.²⁵ Yet when the belief as to a personal Antichrist was changed by Luther and Calvin, the belief of a personal forerunner of Christ gave way also.

Luther expresses himself in this manner:

"The old opinion that Elias and Enoch are to come again in the time of Antichrist, is derived from the text where Christ says, 'Elias truly shall first come and restore all things.' It has found place in all the books and has spread itself through the entire Church. We have no controversy with those who entertain this old belief. They may even wait for a coming of Enoch and Elijah, if they will also permit us to regard it as only an opinion. It is also allowed to believe it is possible to interpret the passages in Malachi and Ecclesiasticus as predicting that Elias shall come again. Walch's ed. vol. vii. col. 494."²⁶

The belief of the Church Fathers is always a very important body of facts when trying to determine the correct interpretation of any Bible passage. The evidence in this case becomes even more significant because of the universal agreement of the Fathers that Elijah the Tishbite must come back as a forerunner before Christ's Second Coming. The opinion was so strongly held that even the outspoken Luther was very careful about this attack on this belief.

²⁵Seiss, op. cit., p. 249

²⁶Seiss, op. cit., p. 250, 251

From the evidence presented by these great scholars we must surely conclude that the literal interpretation of Malachi's prophecy should be given the respect that it is due. Once again, it must be admitted that this line of evidence is not conclusive; on the other hand, it cannot be disregarded as some commentators have done. Gregory the Great says, . . . "The Gospel truth says, Elias shall come and shall restore all things."²⁷

²⁷Pusey, loc. cit.

Argument from the "Witnesses" in Revelation

The similarities in the ministries of the witnesses in Revelation eleven, with those of Elijah, argue for a future return of Elijah.

We will not take time to prove that the two witnesses cannot be anything abstract, but simply state that these witnesses must refer to two individuals. Seiss summarizes this view most clearly when he says, "No reader of the account, having no preconceived theory to defend, would ever think of taking them for bodies or succession of people. All the early fathers, from whom we have any testimony on the subject regarded them as two individual men."²⁸

It is also believed by the writer that these two witnesses will be Old Testament saints "revived" for this special witnessing. This view has been much disputed, especially in the last few centuries. Typical of those who oppose this idea is Plummer who argues "it is inconceivable that Moses and Elias, or any other of the saints of God, should return from Paradise to suffer as these two witnesses."²⁹

Benson states:

²⁸Seiss, op. cit., p. 177

²⁹A. Plummer (exposition) "Revelation," The Pulpit Commentary. eds. H. D. M. Spence and Joseph S. Exell (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., reprinted, 1950), XXII, 289

"But it is neither said nor implied in the text that Elijah the Tishbite should come in person, but only that one should come "in the spirit and power of Elijah," and when one did come, Malachi's words were fulfilled; who no more thought that Elijah should rise again, than Hosea and Jeremiah did that David should be restored to life, in order to reign over Israel and Judah, when they prophesied that the tribes should hereafter serve David their king."³⁰

We will not attempt to answer the charge of Benson for it is outside the realm of this paper, except to say that there are also good reasons for holding the view that David will return in person. Our major concern is whether or not the two witnesses will be revived saints of God.

The context seems to make this interpretation the most plausible. These two witnesses appear upon the scene very suddenly, and they are able to perform great and mighty miracles through the power of God. While it is true that these "witnesses" would not have to be resurrected saints to do these supernatural deeds, the fact that they appear so suddenly upon the scene would argue that they are also supernatural beings. There is no reason that would lead one to think otherwise. The fact, that the whole group of the early church accepted this view without doubt, assures us even further that this is true.

Since these two witnesses are to be two noted Old Testament saints it seems most probable that Elijah shall return as one of these witnesses. In Rev. 11:5,6 John gives a description of the actions of these witnesses.

³⁰Benson, loc. cit.

"And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed. These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will."

The actions of creating fire and shutting the heavens to prevent rain are surely the works of the prophet Elijah when he witnessed against Ahab and the worshippers of Baal. You will remember that at this time the altars of the Lord were broken down, and his prophets were being slain with the sword, and the children of Israel had forsaken the covenant of God, and Elijah seems to be the only one of the faithful remaining. And even as in Elijah's time there was a remnant of seven thousand who had not "bowed their knee to Baal", as a result of the preaching of Elijah there will be 144,000 faithful witnesses throughout the second half of the Tribulation.

In the reign of Ahab, who was a type of Anti-christ, Elijah lived, and testified against the terrible corruption by miracles such as we have here: "And if any man will hurt them fire proceedeth out of their mouth and devoureth their enemies." We know that Elijah caused fire to come down from heaven to destroy the soldiers of the king of Israel sent to arrest him in 2 Kings 1:10. He did this by just giving the command that it be done, so we can say that fire actually did "proceed out of his

mouth."

And it is said of them--"These have power to shut heaven that it rain not in the days of their prophecy." This Elijah also did when he said to Ahab, "As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word." What is even more remarkable, we learn from James 5:17, "Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months;" which is the identical period to the day that witnesses testify in the Tribulation.

It is the view of the writer that Elijah will testify during the first three years and six months of the seven year tribulation period. I believe also that this ministry will be primarily to the Jewish people as Mal. 4:5 seems to indicate. Since this is true, it can be surely said of Elijah as one of the witnesses that "he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers", and that he "shall restore all things." (Mal. 4:6 and Mt. 17:11). This agrees very well with what we learn of the ministry of the two witnesses for it shall be largely through their preaching that the 144,000 Jews who witness during the second half of the tribulation are converted.

Most of the commentators who hold to the two personality view, agree that Elijah probably will be one

of the two witnesses. Opinions vary considerably as to the identity of the second witness. Many scholars do not want to commit themselves while others do venture an opinion, but the evidence of Elijah's return in Mal. 4:5, along with the added evidence we have discovered here in Rev. 11:5,6 it seems certain that Elijah will be one of God's two witnesses.

Argument from Matthew 11:14

The eleventh chapter of Matthew's Gospel gives to us the final word on whether the kingdom was really being offered at this time. Before going any further, the writer of this monograph will state that he firmly believes that the kingdom which was officially offered to Israel was rejected by them, and as a consequence of their rejection it was postponed until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled when God will once again deal with Israel. It is not, however, within the scope of this paper to deal fully with the offer of the kingdom; therefore, this statement of author's convictions will have to suffice.

Previous to this chapter John was placed in prison, for his preaching against sin. The people are now wondering could John really be the official forerunner of the Messiah. It seems that John himself had doubts also, for he sent his disciples to Christ asking, "Art thou He that cometh, or look we for another?" The answer to this question is what everyone wanted to know. The answer came back to John and in the answer he saw the Messiah. "Go and show John again those things which ye do hear and see: 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." These miracles were the very ones which had been prophesied by the prophet Isaiah concerning the works of the Messiah.

Jesus then turns to the people within his hearing and says, "And if ye will receive (him) this is Elias, which was for to come." From these words we see the Lord clearly setting forth the contingent nature of His kingdom. "The immediate establishment of the Kingdom on earth was contingent upon the attitude of Israel toward her Messianic King, for to that nation pertained the divine promises and covenants, (Romans 9:4)."³¹ Would they receive or reject John as the Messiah's forerunner? To reject the forerunner would mean that they also would reject the Messiah and in rejecting the Messiah, the kingdom as well.

This verse fourteen of Matthew chapter eleven is the point of climax to this whole subject. Up to this point, there had been John's powerful preaching of the Gospel of the kingdom. "The kingdom is at hand." Soon afterwards the whole emphasis changes. It is now pointed out to the people of Israel that the outcome as to what would become of the kingdom offer was their decision. This verse seems to indicate that if John had been received and his message heeded, there would have been no need for a future coming of Elijah. But the point of the verse is that he was not received. We need not argue this point, for shortly afterwards John was beheaded and Christ's ministry met with increasing opposition. His opposition continued to mount, He then began to reveal to his disciples

³¹McClain, op. cit., p. 319

the events to follow, namely his suffering and death. His teaching turned from simple to parabolic teaching, which was even harder for their hardened hearts to understand. He at last proceeded to Jerusalem and officially offered Himself as Messiah. But as they had rejected and murdered the Messiah's forerunner they rejected and murdered the Messiah, and in doing so rejected the Kingdom. Therefore, it is utter folly to say that John completely fulfilled the prophecy of Mal. 4:5. For John (the forerunner) and the Messiah and the Kingdom were rejected by the nation. This is the reason the Lord said later, "Elias truly shall first come and restore all things." And He continued to say, "Elias is come already, and they knew him not." They had rejected John and because of this rejection Elijah would have to come in the future to restore all things.

John was Elijah in office and message. And if they would have received him he would have been to them an Elijah and carried out the work of Elijah. It logically follows that if the Jews would have received John there would have been no need for a future coming of Elijah. It is this conclusion that presents a real problem in the mind of some premillennial scholars today. This spirit and power of Elijah view is based upon a faulty interpretation of this verse and is explained by Pentecost in the following manner:

"It is stated in Luke 1:17 that John is one who

came in the spirit and power of Elias. When the Lord said, 'And if ye will receive it, this is Elias, which was for to come' (Matthew 11:14), and 'That Elias is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed' (Matthew 17:12), he was pointing to one who came, not a literal Elijah, but one who came in the spirit and power of Elijah, and in this way satisfied the prophecy. The disciples clearly understood that the Lord was singling out John in this identification (Matthew 17:13). It is stated by Christ that John became the prophesied Elias only upon the reception of the Messiah and His kingdom by Israel (Matthew 11:14) and whether John became the prophesied Elijah was based on contingency. It is true that whether John was the one to fulfill the prophecy or not depended upon whether Israel received or rejected the kingdom being offered, but the attitude toward the kingdom did not change the person of John. He was not and could not be literal Elijah under any circumstances and receiving the kingdom could not make him so. He was one who could have fulfilled the prophecy because the prophecy is interpreted by the Lord as being fulfilled, not in literal Elijah, but in one who comes in Elijah's spirit and power. If literal Elijah must appear Christ could not be making a bona-fide offer for the kingdom. Inasmuch as literal Elijah had not come and John could not have fulfilled that requirement. But if one coming in Elijah's spirit and power fulfills the requirements, then a genuine offer of the kingdom could be made. On the basis of the Lord's words it is concluded that Elijah personally need not appear, although one will come to fulfill this ministry (Matthew 17:12)."³²

The answer to the mental dilemma of these pre-millennial scholars is really very elementary. Jesus told the multitude that if they had received the Kingdom that John announced was at hand, then John, instead of being John, would have been Elijah come back. However, because God foresaw that the Jews would not receive the kingdom, He could not send Elijah at that time. He had

³²Pentecost, op. cit., p. 311,312

to send a substitute who had the spirit and power of Elijah in Elijah's place, so He sent John the Baptist.

Pentecost seems to assume that if God by His foreknowledge knew that Elijah would be rejected, and thus sent John in his place a "bona-fide" offer of the kingdom was not made. With this type of faulty reasoning, you might, using the same logic, say that Christ did not really offer the kingdom because God knew that He was to be slain "foreordained before the foundation of the world"; which I hasten to say Pentecost does not believe. The Bible clearly teaches that God has foreknowledge of all events and also clearly teaches on this question that the Kingdom was genuinely offered to the nation of Israel. Therefore, we can only conclude that God did not send Elijah for the very simple reason that he knew that Israel would reject the Kingdom at this time.

Now perhaps Pentecost and other holders of the "spirit and power view" are a little concerned that unless their view is adopted we can not place the moral responsibility for the rejection of the Kingdom on the Jewish nation. But we must remember in regards to all sins that fall into this category; . . . the sin is not less culpable in that it was foreseen and made a part of the plan of God . . .³³ The nation of Israel was just as morally responsible for the rejection of the Messiah's

³³McClain, op. cit., p. 311

forerunner even though God knew they would reject him, as the Jewish nation was morally responsible for the murdering of the King even though God knew that would happen also. Peter says "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, . . . but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, . . ." (1 Pet. 18:20). And again in Ac. 2:23, it is recorded that Peter says, "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken and by wicked hands have crucified and slain."

While it is certainly true that John the Baptist coming in the official capacity of the forerunner of the Messiah fulfilled in a sense the prophecy of Mal. 4:5, because of the rejection of the Kingdom which he preached, it can not be said that he fulfilled the prophecy of Mal. 4:6; "And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers... This is why our Lord said in Matthew 17:11, "Elias truly shall come first, and restore all things." Since Elijah could not possibly restore all things because of the rejection of the nation, God had to send John as the forerunner, saving Elijah for the time when all things shall be restored by the return of Christ to set up His millennial reign.

In conclusion, let me say that I would be the first to acknowledge that I have not solved all the phil-

osophical problem involved in Mt. 11:14, but it clearly states that if the people would have received the kingdom, then God would have sent literal Elijah. It also is comforting to know that even a great scholar like McClain has not solved all these problems.

"There still remains the philosophical problem, of course, but this is nothing new; it being only an aspect of the wider problem of Divine Sovereignty and Moral Responsibility. And for this there is no completely rational solution which does not end by affirming one and denying the other. But the Word of God teaches the reality of both. And if, perhaps, we shall never want to give up the search for the answer to the problem, a Christian attitude of intellectual humility will help in some degree to alleviate our uneasiness as we continue the quest."³⁴

ENGLISH PARAPHRASE

³⁴ McClain, op. cit., p. 320

ENGLISH PARAPHRASE

Behold I will send to you the resurrected Elijah as one of "my two witnesses" to be a forerunner for Christ's second advent, even as I will send John the Baptist in the spirit and power of Elijah as a forerunner before Christ's first advent, before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord's appearing in glory.

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