***John the Baptist***

The 2nd Coming of the Elijah

Not many Christian believers believe that John the Baptist was the 2nd Coming of Elijah.

In addition, the Jewish people certainly did not believe so. If the Jewish authorities have believed that John the Baptist was the return of Elijah, it may have led them to acknowledge Jesus as the Anointed One, the One who was to come, the Emmanuel, the Messiah. And so today, they would not continue to set up an offering for Elijah at the Passover Table.

Allow me to suggest that claiming John the Baptist was Jesus’ assertion in Matthew 10:23 and 16:28. He qualified it by saying, “If you are willing to believe it.” He knew it was hard to believe since John the Baptist himself denied it in the gospel John 1:21.

John the Baptist was the son of Elizabeth and the high priest Zachariah. The bible says that Elizabeth was a kinswoman to Mary, making John the Baptist and Jesus “cousins.” Therefore John the Baptist was older than Jesus and had Jesus grew up with John the Baptist in Zachariah’s house, they would have been close relatives and Jesus would have certainly confided in John the fact that He was the Messiah. Hard as it may be to accept that fact, at least John would have been told that he, John, may be the “Elijah” that people will certainly inquire about. As Jesus was wise, he would have explained to John that the Return of someone does not mean the actually bodily reconstitution of the original person. No, it was to be another person which the same position and mission as the original person. Elijah was sent to turn the hearts of the parents to their children and the children to their parents. So was the mission of John the Baptist, as Jesus would explain, if anyone is willing to believe and listen.

Why is turning the hearts of parents to their children and vice versa so significant a statement? Let’s explain.

The most endurable love exists between parents and children. Parents love their children unconditionally. Children, by God’s design, receive more love from their parents than anyone else. In the last days, Jesus predicted that even love, and its strongest love expression, may grow cold (Mathew 24:12). When we see this is happening and even promoted, we know we are in the last days. And what do we find in the atheistic communist propaganda? They promote, in elementary school, a love for the state (government) more than their love for their parents. If children report to the government their parents’ violations against the government, they are praised and even awarded some medal for their patriotism. Their reporting may result in their parents’ prosecution and even death and would be herald as the ultimate model for a student. When Elijah was sent, the people of Israel was hanging on to the last strand of faith. He was to somehow salvage a certain remnant of the faithful. Having “failed” his mission to save all of Israel, he ascended into heaven and awaits another day or chance. Thus John the Baptist came to do where Elijah left off. He proceeded to urge the people to Repent and turn back to God and His commandments.

 So the mission of Elijah was and will be in his 2nd Coming to 1) preach repentance, asking God, Jehovah, to forgive their idolatry and return to Jehovah. And 2) the restoring love of parents and children. It signals the last days of the Old Testament era when all love may be extinguished but it portends a new era of the New Testament with great hopes and expectations. Thus, John came and preached, “Repent, the Kingdom of heaven is at hand.” The same message of repentance and Kingdom building would also be in Jesus teaching (Matthew 4:17, Mark 1:15).

The last book of the Old Testament is Malachi. It says, “Before the great and terrible day of the Lord,…”. So the people have a choice. Choose obedience to God and usher in the Kingdom of Heaven. That would be a great day. Or risk complete capitulation to Satanic gods and evil forces. That would be the terrible day. The choice is with the people’s. The outcome is not predetermined. Because men may or may not obey God and His commandments, even God cannot predict what will happen, thus the bible often gives dual prophecies. If we read Deuteronomy 28, it is clear that the outcome depends on man’s fulfilling his responsibility to do God’s Will. If he remains faithful, good things or God’s blessing will rain down upon us. But if man falters and goes astray and starts to worship Gods of Baal, like money and power and position, to name a few of the vices, then lawlessness and destruction may ensue.

Proclaiming the positive outcome is an affirmation and has some energy in terms of momentum. Perhaps John knew this and so he proclaimed, “Repent, the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.” This means he projected the people’s acceptance of God and thus the Kingdom is not far off, but rather here. As Jesus said, “The Kingdom of Heaven is in you.” As soon as you live the righteous life, and your life positively affects others, you feel you are living in the Kingdom of Heaven.

Thus John the Baptist, came to do what the prophet Elijah did, but this time see it through to the end, hopefully.

When Jesus approached John at the river Jordan, John baptized Jesus and the Heavens opened up and the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove, landed on the head of Jesus and John proclaimed, ‘He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.’

John 1:29…

**29**The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! **30**This is he of whom I said, ‘After me comes a man who ranks before me, because he was before me.’ **31**I myself did not know him, but for this purpose I came baptizing with water, that he might be revealed to Israel.” **32**And John bore witness: “I saw the Spirit descend from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him. **33**I myself did not know him, but he who sent me to baptize with water said to me, ‘He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.’ **34**And I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son[[i](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John%201&version=ESV#fen-ESV-26068i)] of God.”

Thus John initially testified that Jesus was the Son of God, the Anointed One, the Messiah.

 However, we don’t read anywhere else where John the Baptist testify to Jesus again. His faith that Jesus was really the Messiah who was to come came under suspicion when he send his two disciples to ask Jesus whether he is the one to come or should we wait for another? (Matthew 11:3). This maybe why he did not become one of Jesus disciples. He would have been the most respected and formidable defender of Jesus when it comes to answering theological assaults of the Pharisees such as “By whose authority do you do these things (such as casting out demons)?” Matthew 21:23.

 Then there is the question of Elijah. If Jesus was the Messiah, where is the Elijah whose coming was prophesized in Malachi? The disciples had no clue, but if John the Baptist had been following Jesus, certainly Jesus would have revealed to him John, that he had the same mission as Elijah, so thus the Return of the Messiah. As a disciple, John would have believed whatever Jesus says. But being that he doubted Jesus, he never made the connection.

 Remember, the 2nd Coming or the Return of someone in the past does not mean that that person’s physical body is reconstituted and resurrects but that another person, given the same mission with the same goals, and responsibilities as the 1st Coming. Just as Elijah urged the people to repent and return to God, Jehovah and restore the right relationship of love (in the Baal idolatry, sexual immorality was rampant). The right relationship of love is modeled after a family. Parents respect their children, not abuse them. Children love and respect their parents and not turn against them. John the Baptist tried to do the same, urging people to repent, turn away from sin and return to God and His commandments, and expect the Kingdom of Heaven to come with the advent of Jesus the Messiah, whom he testify at the river Jordan.

 Due to John’s unfaith, it led him to deny that he is the Elijah (John 1:21). This put him at direct odds with Jesus who claimed that John was the Elijah (Mathew 11:14, 17:13). Without that fact being established, it does seem that Jesus’ claim about John being the Elijah was only to justify his own claim as the Messiah. For everyone who knows scripture, such as the scribes and Pharisees, knows that before the Messiah comes, Elijah must return (Malachi 4:5). Without the support of John the Baptist, whom God had sent to pave the way, make straight the path as Prophet Isaiah proclaimed, Jesus became more vulnerable.

 Likewise, when John the Baptist failed in his belief in Jesus, his life could not be protected. Rather than supporting Jesus, he strayed away and got involved with condemning the marriage of Herodias to king Herod. This made Herodias furious enough to want his demise. So, at the opportune occasion, when king Herod was so pleased with the dance of Salome, daughter of Herodias, that he offered to fulfill any request she may have, Herodias, the mother, urged her to request the head of John the Baptist. That is how John died a tragic death.