

Elijah Has Come Already

“And They Knew Him Not”

FROM THE JULY 1995 PHILADELPHIA TRUMPET

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There is no prophecy more fundamental and yet more misunderstood than that of the end-time Elijah. Traditional Christianity virtually rejects this prophecy. What's more, many of God's own people have now lost sight of this vital knowledge. What does your Bible say concerning this important subject?

WHY SHOULD THERE BE SO MUCH CONFUSION ABOUT the end-time Elijah? The Jews rejected Jesus Christ and therefore didn't recognize the fact that John the Baptist came in the spirit and power of Elijah (Luke 1:17).

Traditional Christianity recognizes John the Baptist; but they fail to see that just as ONE MAN came to prepare for Christ's *First Coming*, there was to be ONE MAN to prepare for His Second Coming (Matt. 17:10-11).

Then there are those who have been called out of this world in this 20th century who should understand the truth about the first Elijah *and* the end-time Elijah. But many have lost that understanding! The Laodiceans, God's seventh and final Church era to arise before the return of Christ, were prophesied to turn away from much of God's truth while becoming lukewarm (Rev. 3:14-19). Their rejection of the end-time Elijah has been the most tragic of all. The world in general did not recognize the first Elijah (Matt. 17:12). So we should not expect many in the world during this end time to recognize the *end-time* Elijah. But God's people should!

PROPHECY IS DUAL

There is a fundamental prophecy for our day in Malachi 3:1: "Behold, I will send my MESSENGER, and HE shall *prepare the way before me*: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to *his temple*, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts." This prophecy cannot be understood unless you understand the biblical principle of *duality*. First, notice the verse refers to A MESSENGER (singular) and "*he* (singular) shall prepare the way before me [Christ]." This verse was fulfilled by John the Baptist—*but only in type!* John was a voice crying out in a physical wilderness preparing

for Christ's First Coming (Mark 1:3). But the prophecy in Malachi 3 is mainly referring to an end-time servant of God who prepared the way for Christ's Second Coming. This will become clear as we proceed.

Malachi 3:1 says this messenger would prepare the way for Christ's coming to *His temple*. To understand the duality of Malachi 3:1, let's first examine a prophecy in Haggai. The material temple Jesus came to the first time was built by a colony of Jews 70 years after the destruction of Solomon's temple. Zerubbabel, the builder of this second temple, was the governor of Judah (Hag. 1:1). Notice Haggai 2:3: "Who is left among you that saw this house in her FIRST GLORY? and how do ye see it *now*? is it not in your eyes in comparison of it as *nothing*?" Some of the older Jews remembered how glorious Solomon's temple was. They were quite critical of this second temple Zerubbabel was building. Regardless of the criticism, God still encouraged Zerubbabel to be strong and to keep working (v. 4).

Verse 6 then jumps way ahead to a prophecy about events to occur just before the Second Coming of Christ. We know this because God has yet to "SHAKE the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land." It's talking about a time just before the return of Christ—during the Day of the Lord.

Now notice verse 9: "The glory of this *latter house* SHALL BE GREATER than of the former...." We have already seen from verse 3 that the second temple was *not* in ANY WAY greater than the first. We have also seen how verse 6 begins with a yet future prophecy. IT NOW BECOMES CLEAR! This is referring to a temple in this END TIME which is to be far greater and much more glorious than Solomon's. This end-time temple is the one to which Christ will return *suddenly* a second time (Mal. 3:1).

Now of what will this end-time temple be composed? What will it look like? The New Testament plainly reveals the specifics concerning the temple to which Christ will return. Notice Ephesians 2:19 refers to the saints, or those members in the true Church, as being part of the household (or family) of God. Verses 20-21 say those members "are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets,

Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the *building* fitly framed together groweth unto an HOLY TEMPLE in the Lord.” God’s saints throughout the ages make up that holy temple! I Corinthians 3:16 says, “Know ye not that ye [saints] ARE THE TEMPLE OF GOD, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?”

When Christ returns, those saints who have been called out of this world will rise in the air to meet Him (I Thes 4:16-17). Those who are dead when Christ returns will be *resurrected* to immortal spirit while those who are alive physically will be *changed* into immortal spirit (I Cor. 15:51-52). It is this resurrected *spiritual* temple of God which will be far more glorious than anything Solomon ever built out of *physical* material!

Understanding biblical duality makes plain the many verses concerning an end-time servant of God who was to prepare the way for Christ’s return.

JOHN THE BAPTIST ONLY A TYPE

Now back to Malachi 3. One man was to prepare the way for Christ’s First Coming. But notice, this passage is primarily referring to the one who would prepare for the Second Coming. “But who may abide the day of his [Christ’s] coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a REFINER’S FIRE, and like fullers’ soap.”

A “refiner’s fire” is used to remove the impurities from precious metals. It’s *extremely hot!* That is the way Christ is to come—as a REFINER’S FIRE. But did He come that way the first time? Obviously not. This verse is referring to Him cleansing the world of its impurities—or SIN—at His SECOND COMING! When Christ came the first time, He had much to say *about* sin. But He certainly did not get rid of it! That will happen in the near future.

Verse 3 continues the future theme. He will come and purify the sons of Levi. That has not yet happened either. As *Malachi’s Message* points out, the whole book of Malachi is really for the end time. The main problem in this end time is the ministers who cause many people to stumble at God’s law (Mal. 2:8). When Christ returns, He will correct that problem.

See also verse 5 of Malachi 3. Christ did not come to render *judgment* the first time. This too is referring to something Christ will do *in the future*. This whole passage is mainly referring to the SECOND COMING of Christ—not the first. And so the primary focus of verse 1 should be on the *end-time* messenger who would prepare the way—not John the Baptist. John was only a *type* of the one who would come before Christ’s Second Coming.

BEFORE THE DAY OF THE LORD

Malachi 4 also refers to an end-time messenger who would come before the Day of the Lord, which again has yet to occur. The warning in Malachi 4:4 is to *remember* and it’s in the context of an end-time Elijah. This becomes especially

important in light of *how many* today have *forgotten* who this “Elijah” was and what he taught.

“Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord: And he [singular] shall *turn the heart of the fathers to the children*, and the *heart of the children to their fathers*, lest I come and smite the *earth* with a CURSE” (vv. 5-6). The reference to the Day of the Lord gives us the time setting. Luke 1:17 refers to John the Baptist as coming in the “spirit and power of Elijah.” But John never turned the hearts of the fathers to their children and the hearts of the children to their fathers. This is referring to an end-time messenger. Those John spoke to didn’t even have the Holy Spirit yet.

Malachi’s Message (MM) discusses the meaning behind the *curse* in Malachi 4:6. The word *earth* in verse 6 can also mean the “inhabitants of a region.” “The context reveals that the inhabitants discussed here are in the Church” (MM, p. 120). The *curse* is referring to “utter destruction”—or the loss of eternal life. “God is primarily talking about destroying the inhabitants of His Church who refuse to build a family around God’s ‘Elijah’ and God’s instructions” (*ibid*, p. 121). When you compare these verses about FAMILY with those who make up the household or FAMILY of God—who are part of the spiritual temple to which Christ is returning (Eph. 2:19-21)—IT ALL BECOMES CLEAR. These verses are referring to the END TIME!

CHRIST’S VISION OF THE KINGDOM

Next, let’s notice a prophecy in Matthew 17. Jesus was with Peter, James and John. He was showing them a vision of the Kingdom of God, which has yet to be set up. He was with Moses and Elijah in the vision.

Notice verses 9-10: “And as they came down from the mountain, Jesus charged them, saying, Tell the *vision* to no man, until the Son of man be risen again from the dead. And his disciples asked him, saying, Why then say the scribes that Elias [or Elijah] must first come?” Let’s understand! John the Baptist had *already come*. Jesus didn’t even begin His ministry until John had finished His commission (Mark 1:14).

“And Jesus answered and said unto them, Elias truly *SHALL* first come, and *RESTORE ALL THINGS*” (Matt. 17:11). Christ makes it abundantly clear that He is referring to an end-time Elijah—one who would *restore* ALL THINGS. *Restore* means to BRING BACK something that was *lost*. John the Baptist didn’t restore anything. But an end-time Elijah was to restore *all things*.

Nevertheless, John was indeed a *type* of this end-time messenger. Christ makes this clear in the next verse: “But I say unto you, That [Elijah] is *come already*, and THEY KNEW HIM NOT, but have done unto him whatsoever they [desired]. Likewise shall also the Son of man suffer of them” (v. 12). Now He is referring to the first messenger who came in the spirit of Elijah (Luke 1:17). “Then the *disciples* UNDERSTOOD that he spake unto them of John the Baptist” (v. 13). Notice,

the disciples *understood* whom Christ was talking about. They recognized who John was. But the rest of the world “knew him not.” They rejected him. John was eventually beheaded! (Mark 6:21-28).

END-TIME ZERUBBABEL

We have already covered the fact that Christ is returning to a glorious spiritual *temple*. Anciently, Zerubbabel was the one who built the *material* temple Christ came to the first time. Would there be an end-time Zerubbabel who would be instrumental in preparing the *spiritual* temple for Christ’s return? **ABSOLUTELY!**

The theme of Zechariah 3 and 4 revolves around events to occur in God’s true Church just before the return of Christ (Zech. 3:8-10).

Zechariah 4:9 says, “The *hands* of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this **HOUSE**; his hands shall also finish it; and thou shalt know that the Lord of hosts hath sent me unto you.” This is referring to an actual man anciently, and it is referring to **ONE MAN prophetically**. Notice in verse 6 that this end-time building project was to be accomplished, “Not by might, nor by power, but *by my spirit*, saith the Lord of hosts.” The subject of this man building “this house” is all within the context of the seven Church eras of Revelation 2-3 (Zech. 4:2, 10; Rev. 1:20). *Malachi’s Message* makes it clear that “this house” is referring to the Philadelphia era of God’s Church (Rev. 3:7:13).

Like Malachi 3, the main emphasis of Zechariah 4 is the end-time fulfillment. Anciently, Zerubbabel built a physical temple out of material things. But in this end-time a *spiritual* temple was to be prepared for the return of Christ. It was to be built **BY GOD’S SPIRIT** (Zech. 4:6), yet *through* Zerubbabel.

Clearly, all of these prophecies point to **ONE** prominent individual who was to come on the scene in this end time. They refer to *one* who would prepare the way for the coming of Christ—**ONE** who would be a voice crying out in a *spiritual* wilderness—one who would *restore all things*. Now if we deny these prophecies, we are denying some of the most **BASIC, FOUNDATIONAL** truths contained in all the Bible. Has this end-time Elijah come and gone? We need to know!

MYSTERY OF THE AGES CONFIRMS

Proving that the above prophecies are in fact *true* and primarily for this **END TIME** is the first step. Once that is determined, then we must prove to *whom* these end-time prophecies refer. Remember, the disciples had the faith to know John the Baptist came in the spirit and power of Elijah (Matt. 17:13). Likewise, God’s disciples today will be able to determine who is the *end-time* Elijah.

Mr. Flurry wrote in *Malachi’s Message* (p. 12), “Mr. Tkach assisted Mr. Armstrong for seven years. Mr. Tkach and most of God’s people heard Mr. Armstrong say that he fulfilled

Matthew 17:10-11, Malachi 4:5-6, and other scriptures. Mr. Tkach agreed—even after Mr. Armstrong was dead!”

Carefully reread that quote from *Malachi’s Message* because it is becoming increasingly obvious that most people who were called to the truth through Mr. Armstrong **DO NOT BELIEVE** he ever *said* he fulfilled those prophecies. Furthermore, they don’t believe the statement that “Mr. Tkach agreed—even after Mr. Armstrong was dead!”

What did Mr. Armstrong believe and teach concerning these prophecies? To understand, let’s again review what the end-time Elijah was prophesied to accomplish:

- He was to restore all things (Matt. 17:11).
- He was to build the end-time spiritual temple to which Christ will return (Zech. 4:9; Mal. 3:1).
- He was to turn the heart of the fathers to the children and the heart of the children to their fathers (Mal. 4:5-6; Luke 1:17).
- He was to prepare the way for the Second Coming of Christ (Isa. 40:3; Mal. 3:1; Matt. 24:14; Mark 1:3).

Keep these points in mind as you examine Mr. Armstrong’s own words in the upcoming quotes, because you will clearly see that he repeatedly referred to *himself* as fulfilling them.

Let’s first look at what Mr. Armstrong wrote in his final book, which he called “the largest and most important book in my life” (co-worker letter, Sept. 23, 1985). That book is *Mystery of the Ages*. In the last section of chapter 6, “Mystery of the Church,” Mr. Armstrong begins with the subhead, “Restoration of God’s Truth to Church.” On page 289, he wrote (hardback edition, emphasis mine throughout), “The time had come for Jesus’ prophecy of Matthew 24:14 **TO BE FULFILLED**.” This verse he referred to says, “And this gospel of the kingdom **SHALL BE PREACHED** in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and **THEN SHALL THE END COME**.” Mr. Armstrong knew someone had to come along at the end of the age and fulfill that prophecy.

On pages 290-291, Mr. Armstrong refers to other end-time prophecies: “It is revealed in Malachi 3:1-5 and 4:5-6 that God would raise up **ONE** in the power and spirit of Elijah, shortly prior to the Second Coming of Christ. In Matthew 17:11 Jesus said, even after John the Baptist had completed his mission that this prophesied Elijah ‘truly shall first come, and restore all things.’ Although it is plainly revealed that John the Baptist had come in the power and spirit of Elijah, he did not restore anything. The **HUMAN LEADER** to be raised up somewhat shortly prior to Christ’s Second Coming was to prepare the way—prepare the Church—for Christ’s coming, and restore the truth that had been lost through the preceding eras of the Church. Also, a door was to be opened for **THIS LEADER** and/or the Philadelphia era of the Church to fulfill Matthew 24:14.”

Then Mr. Armstrong sums it up just a few sentences later: “**THESE PROPHECIES HAVE NOW DEFINITELY BEEN FULFILLED**. The true gospel has been *restored* and has now gone in power into every nation on the face of the earth” (p.291). If you have a copy of *Mystery of the Ages*, read the

whole passage. Even though *many* will not accept it, you will see that Mr. Armstrong makes these concluding remarks in the context of this ONE end-time leader who was to prepare for Christ's return!

“ONE MAN”

Let's again turn our attention to the latter day Zerubbabel who was to build the end-time temple to which Christ would return. The first Zerubbabel was to build a material temple—the second would build a *spiritual* temple.

In a co-worker letter from March 19, 1981, Mr. Armstrong had much to say about the end-time Zerubbabel. He spent a great deal of time in the beginning of his letter showing how God has always worked through one man at a time. He then turned his attention to Zerubbabel and the temple construction. Mr. Armstrong wrote (emphasis *his*), “Zerubbabel built the second temple to which Jesus came the first time. John the Baptist prepared the way before the first coming. But who was to build the spiritual temple to which Christ shall soon come the second time? Who was to prepare the way before His Second Coming?”

“Remember God does things in dual stages. As Zerubbabel built the first temple of material stone, wood and other materials, he was a forerunner or type of one through whom Christ would raise up or build the spiritual temple—His Church of our time, prior to the day of the Lord and Christ's Second Coming. As John the Baptist prepared the way, in the physical wilderness of the Jordan River for the first coming of the human Jesus (both man and God), then coming to His material temple, and to His physical people Judah, announcing the Kingdom of God to be set up more than 1,900 years later, so God would use a human messenger in the spiritual wilderness of 20th-century religious confusion, to be a voice crying out the Gospel of the Kingdom of God, about the spiritual Christ, coming in supreme power and glory to His spiritual temple, to actually establish that spiritual Kingdom of God.

“Brethren, has that been done by this Church?”

“Did God raise up a one-man leadership to be used by Him in building this spiritual temple and in proclaiming after 1,900 years the true Gospel of the Kingdom of God in all the world—to even go to kings and heads of nations (Rev. 10:11)—in bringing the Church back to the faith once delivered (Jude 3)?

“Has this happened, in your days, and has God brought you into this prophetic fulfillment as a part of it?”

“Has anyone else done it?”

Notice the consistent references Mr. Armstrong made to one man. Yet amazingly enough, some have said this letter only proves that Mr. Armstrong felt the whole Church fulfilled these prophecies. The members of the Church did have a significant role in these prophecies. But that role was to *back up and support the* one man. Mr. Armstrong taught that repeatedly. Why else would he conclude by saying, “Has anyone else done it?” There was only one John the Baptist.

Likewise, there was only one who was to prepare the way in this end time.

In the April 1980 *Good News*, Mr. Armstrong wrote an article entitled, “The History of the Beginning and Growth of the Worldwide Church of God.” In it, Mr. Armstrong again took up a significant portion of space explaining how God has always worked through one man. He said, “God chose one man to keep humanity alive—Noah, and his family....

“A few generations later God called one man, Abraham. Then Isaac, then Jacob, then Joseph.... God chose Moses to lead Abraham's descendants out of Egyptian slavery.... When Moses' job was finished, God chose one man, Joshua, to lead the Israelites across the Jordan River into their promised land.”

He then wrote about how God worked through Samuel and then David. Later, God used one man, Zerubbabel, to lead the Jews in building the physical temple. He said, “one man, Peter, was unquestionably the leader” of the apostles.

For those who purport to be following in Mr. Armstrong's footsteps today while maintaining a *collegial, collective* or *democratic* type church government, doesn't it seem strange to see how often Mr. Armstrong referred to the fact that God always works through one man at a time?

Toward the middle of that same article, Mr. Armstrong began to turn the focus toward the office *he* was fulfilling. “God was guiding my life from birth,” he wrote. “Jesus Christ,” he continued, “through His written Word, opened my mind to the prime basic truths He wanted me to have in starting me out as His servant.”

Mr. Armstrong then came quickly to the point of his article. “God's time had come! His time for one, of whom John the Baptist was a type and forerunner, to prepare the way for Christ's second coming. For one of whom Zerubbabel, in building the *second* temple at Jerusalem, was a type and forerunner, of one through whom Christ would build this era of God's church—the spiritual Temple to which Christ will come the *second* time to rule and restore the government of God” (emphasis *his*).

The context of the article makes the truth obvious and clear. Mr. Armstrong began by showing how God always works through one man at a time. He then showed how God had specially prepared him, even from birth, for a very important end-time office. Then he wrote that the time for these amazing prophecies concerning Elijah, John the Baptist and Zerubbabel had come. He then concluded by writing about many of the amazing truths and revelations God had given *him*. Is there any doubt about *whom* Mr. Armstrong was referring to on this subject?

RESTORE ALL THINGS

Let's continue from the same *Good News* article quoted above. Remember, it's within the context of the many truths God was revealing to Mr. Armstrong at the beginning stages of the Worldwide Church of God. “He was preparing ONE,”

Mr. Armstrong wrote, “called and chosen by God, even against that ONE’s will, for an important service in *restoring* the law and government of God to earth—even in the comparatively small Worldwide Church of God. He was preparing ONE whom He conquered and brought to repentance and faith, for this great end-time commission.”

Notice it! God was preparing this special someone through whom He would restore His government to the Worldwide Church of God! And who was the founder and physical head of that Church for over 50 years? Herbert W. Armstrong! There is an important reason why the number one truth restored through Mr. Armstrong was government. More on that later.

In the March 6, 1981 *Worldwide News*, Mr. Armstrong expounded upon the spiritual organization of the Church, or God’s government. The article was actually a transcript of a message Mr. Armstrong gave to the leading ministers of the Church at the time. The article took up most of the space in that particular issue of the *Worldwide News* and is as clear as anything Mr. Armstrong ever printed on the subject of government.

On page 10, Mr. Armstrong began to discuss many of the same prophecies we touched on at the beginning of this article. Then he quoted from Matthew 17 to show how Christ said Elijah *SHALL* come, even though John the Baptist had already *COME* and gone. “He was only a *type* of someone to prepare the way for the Second Coming of Christ,” Mr. Armstrong wrote.

Then notice what Mr. Armstrong wrote *immediately* after that: “I’m going to say something to you now, that I would not have said five or six years ago under any circumstances. I don’t go out trying to fulfill prophecy. *BUT* Jesus said, by their fruits you know. And sometimes you look back on fruits and you can tell some things you couldn’t tell in advance before the fruits had been performed.”

Now what did Mr. Armstrong mean by this statement? Which prophecies did he believe he was fulfilling? After stating this, he then proceeded to talk about John the Baptist and how John was used to prepare for Christ’s First Coming. But the subject again changed to the latter-day fulfillment of these prophecies. “God was going to prepare someone to come and build that temple to which Christ is coming this time, the second time. God was going to raise up someone who is going to prepare the way for the Second Coming and calling people, preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom of God. That’s exactly what Elijah did physically. He reminded them that they had gotten away from the Kingdom and the government of God, and needed the restoring of the government of God.”

Those who insist that Mr. Armstrong never applied these end-time prophecies to himself simply do not know much about what he taught. Mr. Armstrong always gave God the credit for doing the Work. Yet he understood these end-time prophecies all pointed to one man through whom God would do the Work. “He has used *me*,” Mr. Armstrong wrote (*ibid*, p. 11). After admitting God used him, Mr. Armstrong

asked, “Do you think that has happened? Do you think we’re near the time of the coming of Christ? Has anyone proclaimed the Gospel of the Kingdom of God? Has anyone proclaimed the law of God? Has anyone been calling on them to repent?”

Mr. Armstrong became quite clear and obvious toward the end of the article. He began to shift his attention to a possible successor in the event of his death. At that time, many were speculating on who it might be. He didn’t want the brethren to be focusing on that. Yet he did not, as some have assumed, say he would remain alive until the Second Coming of Christ. He said that if he died, what God has “called me for will have been completed.” In the event of that happening, Mr. Armstrong “would expect the Church to continue right on.”

But notice what he said with regard to the office he was fulfilling: “IF I HAVE BEEN SOMEONE IN THE POWER AND THE SPIRIT OF ELIJAH, REMEMBER THERE IS NO PROPHECY THAT GOD WILL HAVE AN ELISHA FOLLOWING ELIJAH.” You see! Mr. Armstrong knew the end-time prophecies pointed to one man to come in the spirit and power of Elijah. He reluctantly admitted to fulfilling this prophecy. Yet amazingly enough, there are still those who say he *never* taught this.

Toward the end of 1985, Mr. Armstrong was very sick. Just four months before he died, he spoke to the Church on the Feast of Trumpets (Sept. 16, 1985). It was to be Mr. Armstrong’s final sermon. In it he said, “There was an *Elijah* to come and to restore things *in the Church*. THAT HAS HAPPENED and what has been restored is the government of God—and many of the truths, at least *17 or 18 principle*, vital doctrines of truth, have been added to about the three that had survived in the Sardis era of the Church.... But they didn’t know about the government of God in the Church. They didn’t know about what I’m telling you today.”

Let there be no doubt. Mr. Armstrong did believe and teach that he alone, with the *support* and backing of the Church, was fulfilling the end-time role of Zerubbabel, John the Baptist and Elijah.

AND AFTER HE DIED?

Perhaps the most obvious proof that Mr. Armstrong believed he fulfilled these prophecies is what was said and taught shortly *after* he died. Mr. Armstrong spoke about the prophecies he was fulfilling toward the end of his life—mainly the last five or six years. He knew God was restoring truth through him. He realized, as we have seen from the above quote, that there were “at least *17 or 18 principle*, vital doctrines of truth” that had been revealed to him throughout his long life of service to God.

He expounded on many of these points of truth in a sermon he gave to the Church December 17, 1983. He then covered several other points of truth before the ministers on May 2, 1984. In his last book, Mr. Armstrong wrote, “this Church, until after the year of 1933, had lost many of these

vital truths. *At least 18* basic and essential truths have been restored to the true Church since that year” (*Mystery of the Ages*, p. 251).

In the August 25, 1986 *Worldwide News*, the Worldwide Church of God printed an article on page 5 entitled, “God restored these 18 truths: How thankful are you for them?” The article was introduced by Joseph Tkach, the successor to Mr. Armstrong. Mr. Tkach wrote, “The Editorial Services staff has compiled here, for the first time in any of the Church’s publications, 18 essential, basic truths that God restored to His Church through our late Pastor General Herbert W. Armstrong.

“As you prepare spiritually for the coming Feast of Tabernacles, please spend time with this important article, reviewing each of the 18 truths and thanking God for restoring them to His Church.”

The article recommended that we “review this list to better appreciate how much we have benefited from what God RESTORED through Mr. Armstrong.” And before the article listed what had been restored, notice what was written: “Jesus said, ‘Elias [Elijah] truly shall first come, and restore all things’ (Matthew 17:11). Jesus was referring to something that was to happen in the future. John the Baptist had already come, and Jesus didn’t even begin His ministry until John had been put in prison. John didn’t restore anything. Jesus was referring to another man, not John.

“Shortly before the Great Tribulation and the Day of the Lord, someone would come in the spirit and power of Elijah, in the spirit and power of John the Baptist, and would restore all things to the Church. Now what has been restored to the Church?”

Then followed a listing of those 18 truths. Clearly, Mr. Tkach believed *at that time* that Mr. Armstrong fulfilled the Elijah office. But that is not the case today (see *Malachi’s Message* for proof). In fact, almost all of the 18 truths revealed to Mr. Armstrong have since been changed by Mr. Tkach. It’s clear that Mr. Tkach, and every other leader in God’s Church for that matter, with the exception of the Philadelphia Church of God, does *not* believe Mr. Armstrong fulfilled the role of Elijah. But at one time, Mr. Tkach *did* believe it, as is evidenced by the above quotes.

Notice how the article on the 18 truths was completed: “Where would we be without these truths? Without them—without Herbert W. Armstrong’s legacy of these 18 restored truths—there isn’t much left.”

For those who believe Mr. Armstrong never taught that he fulfilled these end-time prophecies, we might ask, *why* would Mr. Tkach refer to Mr. Armstrong as the end-time Elijah and then actually print the 18 truths in the *Worldwide News* for all church members to see? Was this something new that originated with Mr. Tkach? If it was, don’t you think there would have been a lot of questions by the members concerning this “new, never before understood truth”? The truth is that as early as 1979, church members began to hear on a regular basis that Mr. Armstrong was the one fulfilling these prophecies. The fact that Mr. Tkach

taught this immediately after Mr. Armstrong died only confirms it!

WHY RESTORE?

But why was it so important for this end-time Elijah to *restore* something? *Restore* means to bring something back which was at one time lost or taken away.

Let us now go back, even before the beginning of man, to the time when Lucifer was being trained at the very throne of God. Notice Ezekiel 28:14: “Thou [Lucifer] art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire.” Lucifer was taught by God at the very throne of God. God said, “I have set you so”! God gave Lucifer his position of authority. In other words, there was government right from the very start.

But what happened? “Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee” (v. 15). Lucifer sinned against God’s eternal law. Something changed at that point. What was it? The government of God *on earth*. Lucifer was taught and trained at the throne of God and then sent to this earth by God to beautify it and to administer the government of God. When he rebelled, Lucifer took the government of God away from this earth! And it is because the government of God has been absent from this earth that mankind in general has lived contrary to God’s laws. As we read in II Corinthians 4:4, it is Satan who is the *god of this world*, not God. The whole world has been deceived (Rev. 12:9) into believing God is in charge of this earth. That is simply not true. Satan has been ruling this world for almost 6,000 years now. Man’s laws and governments have been inspired by the god of this world.

But soon that will all change. Jesus Christ came to this earth the first time with a *message*. It was a message about the future Kingdom of God (Mark 1:14-15). Jesus Christ is to be the King of that Kingdom. Speaking of that time in the very near future, Acts 3:19 says, “Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.” The word *refreshing* in this verse means “a cooling, a recovery of breath, or a revival.” After 6,000 years under the rule and sway of Satan, this world indeed needs a *cool refreshing*.

Notice who will bring this all about: “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” (vv. 20-21). The word *restitution* means a time of restoring something that had been taken away. The *Gesenius Lexicon* defines it as a “restoration of true theocracy.” *Restitution* simply means restore! God’s theocratic form of government was once here on this earth until Lucifer took it away when he became Satan! God’s government will soon be *restored* to this earth. Jesus

Christ will be the one who brings about that restoration at His Second Coming.

But before that occurs, there had to be one, specially called, who would prepare the way for Christ's Second Coming. And in preparing for His return, this prominent end-time individual was to also "restore all things." But to whom would this end-time Elijah restore *all things*? The world? That won't happen until Christ returns (Acts 3:19-21). The end-time "Elijah" was to restore all things to the Church! Much of what Christ had revealed and taught to the apostles was lost after the first century. For the government to be ultimately restored to the world, God had to first restore it to the Church in this end time in order to prepare the way for Christ's return!

Notice what Mr. Armstrong said in a sermon, October 2, 1982: "Jesus said the Elijah shall *yet* come and restore all things. Elijah [the first one] did not restore what was taken away. The heavens have received Jesus until the times of restitution of all things (Acts 3:19-21). *Restitution* means restoring something that had been taken away. Restoring to a former state or condition of what was taken away—the government of God on this earth. The government of God was taken away. It was to be restored....

"God raised *me* up to restore it. God raised *me* up to restore the government of God. But it is only restored so far in the Church. I have no authority from God; no ability to restore the government of God any further than just over you brethren in the Church. But that has been done. That has been done, brethren.... You'd better realize brethren what this Church is and what you are behind when you say you are behind me 100 percent."

Now we see why the very first truth contained in the 18 truths is "the government of God." Notice what the article on the 18 truths said concerning this most important first truth: "When Christ comes, He will restore God's government to the whole earth. So you can be sure the one to come in the spirit and power of Elijah would restore God's government in His Church. When Mr. and Mrs. Armstrong came among the

Oregon Conference era of the Church of God (Seventh Day), the church had the right name, the law, the Sabbath and the tithing system. But they also had a government of men, with a biannual conference, voting just like they do in the world.

"Today the government of God has been restored to His Church. That's the kind of government you find in Ephesians 4 and I Corinthians 12."

Can we clearly see why Bible prophecy points to one prominent individual in this end time? There had to be an end-time Elijah because God's government had to be restored within the Church! The problems and evils of this world stem from the fact that nations simply do not want Christ to reign over them (Luke 19:14). God is soon going to send His Son back to establish His government. But that will not happen until other government positions are filled by those who have been thoroughly prepared for and taught under that government.

For those who might still insist there is no possible way Mr. Armstrong could have fulfilled the prophesied role of Elijah, ask yourself: If he didn't, who did? And if no one has yet fulfilled it, that means nothing has yet been restored! And that is exactly what Satan wants you to think! He wants you to deny that this prophecy has been fulfilled so he can lull you to sleep—thinking there must be many years, perhaps decades, before Christ could ever return.

Several churches have come out of the Worldwide Church of God since Mr. Armstrong's death in 1986. But as we have said so many times before, the only Church which believes Mr. Armstrong fulfilled the end-time role of Elijah and that God restored His government through him is the Philadelphia Church of God. Can you begin to see why the subject of government is such a key issue? It is the point of truth around which all of the other 18 truths revolve!

Why is it so many people today reject this fundamental teaching on the end-time Elijah? In the first century, John the Baptist came in the spirit and power of Elijah. Yet Christ plainly said, "they knew him not" (Matt. 17:12). And so it is today.

