

The Spirit of Elijah

- 1. An example of the ministry of the Spirit of Elijah
- 2. There is a wonderful prophecy of God in the last verses of the book of Malachi.
 - Mal. 4:5-6 "Behold, I am going to send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and terrible day of the Lord. And he will restore the hearts of the fathers to their children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers,
- 3. The Spirit of Elijah is God's provision for men and their children for the blessing of raising a godly seed.
- 4. I would like for us to get an overview of God's order in the Old Testament for fathers, see what happens when fathers disregard God's order, and then recognize God's glorious provision and promises made for us as fathers.
- **God's order for Fathers and Their Children - Deut. 6:1-12 *The father and his family are the foundation to the church and society.***
 - 1. God has a vision for His people and He gives it through His ministers.
 - 6:1a "Now this is the commandment, the statutes and the judgments which the Lord your God has commanded me to teach you, that you might do them in the land where you are going over to possess it,"
 - 2. God's vision implemented depends on fathers teaching and leading.
 - Deut. 6:2 so that you and your son and your grandson might fear the Lord your God, to keep all His statutes and His commandments, which I command you, all the days of your life, and that your days may be prolonged.
 - Deut. 6:3 "O Israel, you should listen and be careful to do it, that it may be well with you and that you may multiply greatly, just as the Lord, the God of your fathers, has promised you, in a land flowing with milk and honey.
 - Deut. 6:4 "Hear, O Israel! The Lord is our God, the Lord is one!
 - Deut. 6:5 "And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.
 - Deut. 6:6 "And these words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart;
 - Deut. 6:7 and you shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up.
 - Deut. 6:8 "And you shall bind them as a sign on your hand and they shall be as frontals on your forehead.
 - Deut. 6:9 "And you shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.
 - Deut. 6:10 "Then it shall come about when the Lord your God brings you into the land which He swore to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, to give you, great and splendid cities which you did not build,
 - Deut. 6:11 and houses full of all good things which you did not fill, and hewn cisterns which you did not dig, vineyards and olive trees which you did not plant, and you shall eat and be satisfied,
 - Deut. 6:12 then watch yourself, lest you forget the Lord who brought you from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.
 - Deut. 6:13 "You shall fear only the Lord your God; and you shall worship Him, and swear by His name.
 - Deut. 6:14 "You shall not follow other gods, any of the gods of the peoples who surround you,
 - Deut. 6:15 for the Lord your God in the midst of you is a jealous God; otherwise the anger of the Lord your God will be kindled against you, and He will wipe you off the face of the earth.
 - 3. A father's heart must be turned toward God first and then his family second.

- 4. If fathers don't teach their sons to teach their children, then God's vision and order will be lost. There'll come a generation who will forget the Lord.
 - A. It is not God's way for pastors, youth ministers, Sunday School teachers, and others to be the primary teacher of the women and children.
 - B. If sons aren't taught by their fathers through their example and word regularly, as a general rule, they won't listen to the ministers of the church.
 - C. If fathers' hearts are not turned to their children, the children develop hard hearts due to bitterness and neglect.
 - D. The Old Testament record is filled with testimonies.
 - Josh. 24:14-16 "Now, therefore, fear the Lord and serve Him in sincerity and truth; and put away the gods which your fathers served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the Lord. And if it is disagreeable in your sight to serve the Lord, choose for yourselves today whom you will serve: whether the gods which your fathers served which were beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." And the people answered and said, "Far be it from us that we should forsake the Lord to serve other gods;
 - Josh. 24:19 Then Joshua said to the people, "You will not be able to serve the Lord, for He is a holy God. He is a jealous God; He will not forgive your transgression or your sins.
 - Josh. 24:27 And Joshua said to all the people, "Behold, this stone shall be for a witness against us, for it has heard all the words of the Lord which He spoke to us; thus it shall be for a witness against you, lest you deny your God."
 - Josh. 24:31 And Israel served the Lord all the days of Joshua and all the days of the elders who survived Joshua, and had known all the deeds of the Lord which He had done for Israel.
 - Judg. 2:10 And all that generation also were gathered to their fathers; and there arose another generation after them who did not know the Lord, nor yet the work which He had done for Israel.
- **What failed to happen? The fathers' hearts weren't turned toward the Lord or their families and they forsook the Lord's first instructions to fathers.**
 - 2 Kin. 17:7-8 Now this came about, because the sons of Israel had sinned against the Lord their God, who had brought them up from the land of Egypt from under the hand of Pharaoh, king of Egypt, and they had feared other gods and walked in the customs of the nations whom the Lord had driven out before the sons of Israel, and in the customs of the kings of Israel which they had introduced. **[The fathers and their children lived lifestyle like the people around them. They were cowardly and feared man more than God. They were afraid to be different themselves and were afraid for their children to be different.]**
 - 2 Kin. 17:9 And the sons of Israel did things secretly which were not right, against the Lord their God. Moreover, they built for themselves high places in all their towns, from watchtower to fortified city. **[If fathers fail in this, their sons will do things secretly against the Lord.]**
 - 2 Kin. 17:12-13 And they served idols, concerning which the Lord had said to them, "You shall not do this thing." yet the Lord warned Israel and Judah, through all His prophets and every seer, saying, "Turn from your evil ways and keep My commandments, My statutes according to all the law which I commanded your fathers, and which I sent to you through My

servants the prophets." **[God kept pointing back to the instructions He gave at the first, but they wouldn't listen. They didn't realize the significance of it because their hearts were turned elsewhere.]**

- 2 Kin. 17:14-15 However, they did not listen, but stiffened their neck like their fathers, who did not believe in the Lord their God. And they rejected His statutes and His covenant which He made with their fathers, and His warnings with which He warned them. And they followed vanity and became vain, and went after the nations which surrounded them, concerning which the Lord had commanded them not to do like them. **[They conformed to their surroundings, took on the world's values].**
- 2 Kin. 17:17 Then they made their sons and their daughters pass through the fire, and practiced divination and enchantments, and sold themselves to do evil in the sight of the Lord, provoking Him. **[When fathers do not listen and believe God's word, they subject their children to Satan and the influence of the world--the spirit of antichrist.]**
- 2 Kin. 17:18-20 So the Lord was very angry with Israel, and removed them from His sight; none was left except the tribe of Judah. Also Judah did not keep the commandments of the Lord their God, but walked in the customs which Israel had introduced. And the Lord rejected all the descendants of Israel and afflicted them and gave them into the hand of plunderers, until He had cast them out of His sight. **[God's reproof to fathers for rejecting God's order is that his family is given into the hand of the plunderers.]**
- 2 Kin. 17:41 So while these nations feared the Lord, they also served their idols; their children likewise and their grandchildren, as their fathers did, so they do to this day.
- 2 Kin. 22:13 "Go, inquire of the Lord for me and the people and all Judah concerning the words of this book that has been found, for great is the wrath of the Lord that burns against us, because our fathers have not listened to the words of this book, to do according to all that is written concerning us."
- 5. The OT ends with a sad commentary on Israel's understanding of God's plan for blessing His people, but a promise of hope for the body of Jesus Christ. God's Spirit will turn the hearts of the fathers to their children whereas the law was powerless to do it.
 - Mal. 4:4-6 "Remember the law of Moses My servant, even the statutes and Lordinances which I commanded him in Horeb for all Israel. "Behold, I am going to send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and terrible day of the Lord. And he will restore the hearts of the fathers to their children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the land with a curse."
- **The New Testament Affirms God's order and Reveals God's Provision and Promise**
 - Luke 1:13-17 But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for your petition has been heard, and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you will give him the name John. "And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth. "For he will be great in the sight of the Lord, and he will drink no wine or liquor; and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit, while yet in his mother's womb. "And he will turn back many of the sons of Israel to the Lord their God. "And it is he who will go as a forerunner before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers back to the children, and the disobedient to the attitude of the righteous; so as to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."
 - 1. The Spirit of Elijah is the Holy Spirit.
 - 2. The Spirit of Elijah does what a man could not do on his own: turn his own heart toward God and toward his family.

- 3. The Spirit of Elijah turns the hearts of the children to their parents and thus prepares the way for the Lord in the next generation.
- **What Can We Do?**
 - 1. We can receive the conviction, assume our responsibility for our sin and the sin of our fathers, and repent .
 - Ezra 9:2 "For they have taken some of their daughters as wives for themselves and for their sons, so that the holy race has intermingled with the peoples of the lands; indeed, the hands of the princes and the rulers have been foremost in this unfaithfulness." **[We have allowed our sons and daughters to intermingle with the world, and even our pastors and elders have been unfaithful.]**
 - Ezra 9:3-5 And when I heard about this matter, I tore my garment and my robe, and pulled some of the hair from my head and my beard, and sat down appalled. Then everyone who trembled at the words of the God of Israel on account of the unfaithfulness of the exiles gathered to me, and I sat appalled until the evening offering. But at the evening offering I arose from my humiliation, even with my garment and my robe torn, and I fell on my knees and stretched out my hands to the Lord my God; **[We should bow before God in our humiliation and stretch out our hands before God.]**
 - Ezra 9:6 and I said, "O my God, I am ashamed and embarrassed to lift up my face to Thee, my God, for our iniquities have risen above our heads, and our guilt has grown even to the heavens. **[Acknowledge our guilt and the guilt of our fathers before us.]**
 - Ezra 9:7 "Since the days of our fathers to this day we have been}in great guilt, and on account of our iniquities we, our kings **[those who govern our land] and our priests [those who minister God's word to us]** have been given into the hand of the kings of the lands **[to alien rule (Madison Ave, Hollywood, Nashville, Wall Street)],** to the sword **[destruction and death],** to captivity **[addictions and bondage],** and to plunder **[we've been robbed]** and to open shame, as it is this day.
 - Ezra 9:8-9 "But now for a brief moment **[God is giving us a moment of grace by revealing to us His truth]** grace has been shown from the Lord our God, to leave us an escaped remnant and to give us a peg in His holy place, that our God may enlighten our eyes and grant us a little reviving in our bondage. "For we are slaves; yet in our bondage, our God has not forsaken us, but has extended lovingkindness to us in the sight of the kings of Persia, to give us reviving to raise up the house of our God, to restore its ruins, and to give us a wall in Judah and Jerusalem. **[Elijah Ministries exists as a testimony that God has not forsaken us today and is reviving His people that the house of God, the church, may be restored and protected.]**
 - Ezra 9:10-12 "And now, our God, what shall we say after this? For we have forsaken Thy commandments, which Thou hast commanded by Thy servants the prophets, saying, 'The land which you are entering to possess is an unclean land with the uncleanness of the peoples of the lands, with their abominations which have filled it from end to end and with their impurity. 'So now do not give your daughters to their sons nor take their daughters to your sons, and never seek their peace or their prosperity, that you may be strong and eat the good things of the land and leave it as an inheritance to your sons forever.' **[Has the church sought the peace and prosperity of the world by embracing methods and messages to make them feel comfortable in our pews and to build the church? What has been the outcome? The loss of our families!]**

- Ezra 9:13 "And after all that has come upon us for our evil deeds and our great guilt, since Thou our God hast requited us less than our iniquities deserve, and hast given us an escaped remnant as this,
 - Ezra 9:15 "O Lord God of Israel, Thou art righteous, for we have been left an escaped remnant, as it is this day; behold, we are before Thee in our guilt, for no one can stand before Thee because of this."
 - 2. We can believe and trust in the God's promise that He will work by the power of His Spirit in our hearts and in the hearts of our children.
 - 3. If we do believe, then let us repent to our children, confess our sin, take back the responsibility to teach, train, and protect our children from the world, and speak God's word to them.
 - 4. God's word gives us a clear curriculum and vision for young women and young men in Titus 2. The fathers should teach the young men and the women teach the young women the things which are listed there. If a family attended to those instructions, they would have wisdom for all decisions regarding their children and teens. If an event or activity doesn't promote or train in the areas mentioned there, then it isn't wise or necessary.
- **The Spirit of Elijah is Moving and Speaking**
 - Will you bow before the Lord in repentance and spread your hands out in shame for the destruction which has occurred to His people, your family, due to father's hearts turned away from the Lord?

Do you believe God's promise? To what are the hearts of your children turned? Will you put God to the test and believe Him for the salvation of your children? You prepare the way by directing your heart toward them, and God will prepare the way in their hearts for His Son.