

Was He Elijah?

Was John the Baptist Elijah? Mt 11:14. In what way was he? He opposed the religious establishment of his day, exposed them, and revealed who the true God was.

Mt 17:10-12 — This was after the transfiguration, coming down the mountain. Peter, John, and James had seen a vision of Elijah and Moses (verse 4) — the two men who were the embodiment of the Law and the Prophets. John the Baptist had been recently beheaded. Why did the scribes teach Elijah must come first? Because Malachi said it in Mal 4. Its recorded in Ecc'cus 48:10-11 also.

Mk 9:12; Mt 11:14. No doubt John was Elijah if we can trust the Son of God and the angel who announced his birth and ministry (Lk 1:17).

But how was he Elijah? He certainly wasn't Elijah resurrected, but in the spirit and power of Elijah. This is what John possessed. 2 Kng 2:9-15; 6:15-17, and see also 2 Kng 1.

Elijah showed many signs and miracles. What were John's signs and miracles that he showed to prove his ministry? Actually he denied it to the Pharisees when questioned. Jn 10:41 is the people's testimony of John. He gave no sign, but he pointed to Messiah. Our Master's testimony of John is in Mt 11:7-14.

The question is not that John was Elijah, but did he restore all things according to Mt 17:11 and Mal 4:5? Have we been expressing this day for the last 2000 years? Our Master stopped short when he quoted Isa 61 at the synagogue in Nazareth (Lk 4:18-19). One could conceivably state that John did come before the day of the Lord until one stumbles upon Acts 3:19-21. Here Peter makes it clear that the restoration takes place after Messiah ascended and before he returns (Mt 11:14). This should not surprise us too much since the Scriptures do not preclude a third appearance of Elijah. Consider also that in Messiah's day no one discerned that Messiah would appear not once, but twice. The Jews have stumbled over this for 2000 years.

Returning to Lk 1:17, have the hearts of the fathers been turned to the children; have the disobedient been made righteous? Have a people been made ready, prepared for the Lord? What is in need of restoring? Head-covering? His Name? The Sabbath? A holy nation?

Christianity today is exactly where the Jews were 2000 years ago.