



Elijah Does Come First

“. . . to be sure, Elijah does come first, and restores all things” Mark 9:12

The Elijah ministry is the ministry of restoration to prepare the way for God’s visitation in an individual’s life or that of a community. The Elijah ministry comes to *“Make a highway for the Lord through the wilderness. (To) make a straight, smooth road through the desert for our God. (To) fill the valleys and level the hills. (And to) straighten out the curves and smooth off the rough spots. Then the glory of the Lord will be revealed, and all people will see it together” (Isaiah 40:3-5)*



Just like what Elijah did on Mount Carmel to prepare the way for God’s fire to fall. He restored the altar of the Lord that was in ruins and he set things in order.

This is not always a pleasant experience. We like to think of God’s visitation as a beautiful thing to look forward to. And indeed it is. But before God’s glory can come in an individual’s life, or that of a community, “Elijah does come first”.

The Elijah ministry is neither attractive nor pleasant. It involves getting into the mud and sorting things out. When we are going through it, it is not usually an emotionally high experience.

For some of us the Elijah work might be going on right now in our lives or our particular Christian community. God often introduces the Elijah ministry in our midst through particular experiences he allows our way to help us see beneath our neat religious clothing. Some of us might be passing through a time in our lives or ministries when we are coming to see that we are not as sanctified as we thought we were. Perhaps we have failed terribly and can see in deed that *“I know that nothing good lives in me”*. Perhaps we are experiencing misunderstanding with others and surprised at all the mess that is coming up. Suddenly the rottenness of our life begins to come to the surface. And the tendency at this time is to despair and to feel that God is in the process of setting us aside. Yet the truth is that God is bringing the Elijah ministry so as to prepare the way for his glory to be revealed in our lives and in our community.

Malachi describes this experience *“But who can endure the day of his coming? Who can stand when he appears? For he will be like a refiner’s fire or a launderer’s soap. He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; he will purify the Levites and refine them like gold and silver. Then the Lord will have men who bring offerings in righteousness.”*

Here we see the truth so clearly – repentance must come before revival. Like John the Baptist, the work of the Elijah experience is to bring us to repentance. God must set things in order before he can send down his glory. The trenches and channels must be unplugged and cleansed before the river can flow. To desire the latter without expecting the former is folly.



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Yet we need not despair if we or our community are going through times of unpleasant harsh realities of our ugliness. Remember that the fact that Elijah has come should encourage us that the LORD is preparing to visit us. Hallelujah! What we need to do is to endure the dealing of God. Those that would see the glory of God are those who refuse to hide behind their Pharisaic self-righteous garments. Those who like Isaiah (when he experienced the Elijah ministry in Isaiah chapter 6), would face up to the truth in repentance asking God to restore order into their lives.

We are in the final days, this is the time of the final harvest and God is intent that "the glory of the LORD be revealed (in his church) so that all mankind together will see it." This is why once again God is raising up the Elijah ministry all around his body. He is shaking all that can be shaken. Let us beware of despising the "Elijah's" or the ministry of Elijah in our midst. Rather let us cooperate with God to restore order in our lives, our families, our ministries, and in the Church.



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I love to get feedback from you friends. Please - if you have found this or any of my past articles helpful, please write chim_ibidun@hotmail.com and let me know.

* **Calvary Ministries (CAPRO)**, my agency, works among the Fulanis in Nigeria and Guinea-Conakry as well as 45 other unreached peoples in Africa. If you are interested in knowing how you can serve as a sender with us please contact me at chim_ibidun@hotmail.com. You might also like to visit our website at www.capromissions.org.

Comments? Questions? etc. If these messages have been helpful or unclear it would encourage us to hear from you, please write to chim_ibidun@hotmail.com.

PLEASE are you born again? It is not enough to believe in the existence of God, to go to church, or be interested in spiritual things. Jesus said "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me" (John 14:6). Jesus died to deliver you from sin so that you can come to God. (John 3:16) If you ask him to forgive you and give you a new heart he will. (Acts 2:38; Romans 10:9-11). Try it. I'd love to hear from you @ chim_ibidun@hotmail.com.

Chim'sWRITE are regular articles on Christian living and cross-cultural missions from Chimezie Onyebilanma a cross-cultural missionary with **Calvary Ministries (CAPRO)** in Togo. CAPRO is an indigenous African non-denominational cross-cultural mission agency involved in reaching the remaining unreached peoples in 15 countries of Africa as of present. CAPRO is involved in missions mobilization, training, and research as well as church-planting and mercy ministries (literacy, rural development, primary health-care, relief and rehabilitation). CAPRO is a faith mission, both the ministry and its missionaries depend on God's provision through the giving of his people. None of its missionaries are salaried. All gifts are used as designated.

Surface Address: Calvary Ministries (CAPRO), Togo. B.P. 14223, Lome.
Tel: (228) 221 33 78 or (228) 900 94 97

To learn more about the cross-cultural missionary work of CAPRO send email to chim_ibidun@hotmail.com with "information on CAPRO" in the subject column or visit www.capromissions.org.

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