

Billy Graham: More than a Preacher - Could the Reverend Billy Graham be Elijah?

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Billy Graham

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“The prophet Elijah is one of the most important persons to ever live. His days were remarkably similar to our own. In the encroaching darkness of his times, God used this great man as a catalyst for nationwide revival. Now, God wants the “spirit and power of Elijah” (Luke 1:17, ESV) to return among His people. Come prayerfully study God’s Word and hear His voice. Learn how to become completely dependent upon Him and see Him use you in ways you never imagined.”

By Jack Graham

<http://www.thecove.org/Event/events-detail/e-1568-the-days-of-elijah-being-used-by-god-during-dark-times/>

In another website, speaking on significant of Billy Graham’s mission to that of John the Baptist one writes, “A few days ago, my wife and I watched a special televised broadcast of Billy Graham’s evangelistic campaign in Dallas, Texas, last Fall. There was some great music by Michael W. Smith and the Gaither Vocal Band. Then, when it came time for Billy Graham to speak, he was introduced by former President George Bush. What a wonderful compliment to Mr. Graham and to his faithfulness in preaching the gospel to many presidents and their families over the years. If Jesus were to preach at a football stadium in Dallas, Texas, who would you expect to introduce Him? I can assure you that John the Baptist would not be at the top of the list. Indeed, I doubt that John would have been on the list at all. In a sense, one could say that John’s mission in life was to introduce Jesus as God’s promised Messiah, the hope of all the ages.”

By Robert L. Deffinbaugh,

<https://bible.org/seriespage/john-baptist-and-jesus-matthew-31-17>

According to the Unificationists’ view (Rev. Moon’s follower), in our modern world today, there has never risen a John the Baptist/Elijah figure, on the world scale, greater than Billy Graham! As the cover of Time Magazine put it “From Truman to Bush II, he’s had a job no one has ever had—spiritual guide to the most powerful men in the world.” Though, there was no revelation in the Scriptures foretelling the return of the John the Baptist or Elijah like in Jesus’ time to make people prepared to receive the Lord of the Second Coming in our time. But truly, if we tune ourselves to our innermost spiritual senses, and study the life of Billy Graham and how God had selected, prepared, and raised him up to occupy such a high calling, we would be amazed by the many similarities we found in the mission and life stories of these two highly inspired men. Billy Graham and John the Baptist.

Like John the Baptist, Billy Graham was a wanderer, as portrayed in *Time* Magazine (August 20, 2007), he is “a preacher who had no church, and who spent his life preaching to football stadiums full of people whom he never saw again.” Billy Graham was an inspired charismatic minister who touched the hearts

and souls of millions of people around the globe, awakening them and kindling their spiritual fire to receive the returning Christ. This, in a sense, is like the John the Baptist, who went before the Lord, to prepare a people for Him.

In reviewing Billy Graham's early life story as recounted in his book *Just As I Am*, in the "180-Degree Turn" chapter, Reverend Graham began his chapter, speaking about his hometown, Charlotte, North Carolina. He said, in 1934, Charlotte, North Carolina, had the reputation of being one of the leading church-going cities in the United States. In a sense this city was the "new Jerusalem" prepared by God to raise a modern-day John the Baptist figure; just as Pyongyang North Korea, was seen as the New Jerusalem of the East, prepared by God to raise a Messiah figure.

Reverend Graham spoke of his father's dramatic spiritual experience, after an incident on the night he attended a church meeting when the preacher called him to the front of the platform and threw his arms over his shoulders and announced to the crowd saying "Here is a young man whom God has called to preach, I'm sure". From that experience, he fell sick for days, he could neither eat nor sleep, didn't know what had hit him, but deep in his heart, he somehow knew that the Lord had something planned for him and he believed that he would know when the time was right.

Years later, his father recalled a prayer that his preacher, Vernon Patterson, had prayed: "that out of Charlotte the Lord would raise up someone to preach the Gospel to the ends of the earth." Billy Graham, who believed his father sincerely, wanted to fulfill the preacher's call but somehow had no means to do it. As Billy Graham explained, "In fact, he privately hoped and prayed that his firstborn son might someday fulfill the old Methodist evangelist's prophecy by becoming a preacher in his stead". At that time, in 1934, it wasn't clear to the young Billy Graham that the person to be delegated to preach the Gospel to the ends of the earth was he.

Billy's appointment with his destiny was sparked the night he went to hear the fiery preacher, Dr. Mordecai Ham, a Southern Baptist minister from Oklahoma. Dr. Ham was invited by a few Charlotte ministers and several members of a group called the Christian Men's Club to preach in their scheduled revival meetings in Charlotte's largest tabernacle which seats 5,000. The preacher was well known for his "stern and fiery" preaching on Sin and Hell and Judgment by fire in the Last Days. His sermons often got published widely in the newspapers and people flocked to his revival meetings by the thousands. The news of his coming to preach at the revival meeting in Charlotte reached every household. The whole town was ready for his coming, including the Graham family.

It is interesting to note how God uses certain people to forward his predestined plan through them and their prophecy, as in the case of these two preacher-prophets. God used Reverend Vernon Patterson, Billy's father's Methodist minister, to prophecy that out of Charlotte, God will raise a man who will preach the Gospel to the whole world. He also prophesied or called on the Graham's family to fulfill that prophecy, when the preacher called Billy's father to the front and said "Here is a young man whom God has called to preach, I'm sure."

Later, in a parallel way, God used Dr. Mordecai Ham as an instrument on the night Billy attended the revival meeting, to call on the young Billy Graham to take on that mission: to preach the Gospel to the ends of the earth. And likewise, Billy had a similar, spiritual experience to his father, when his preacher prophesied and called on him to take that mission.

Apparently, Billy's parents attended a few nights of revival and heard Dr Ham's lively sermons; they felt so inspired and believed that the preacher brought good hope and inspiration to the whole city more than any revival meeting in the past. They really tried to get Billy to attend the revival meetings and hear this great preacher, but Billy wasn't interested in any form of preaching or revivals. As Billy said, "Despite my parent's enthusiasm, I did not want anything to do with anyone called an 'evangelist'—and particularly, with such a colorful character as Dr. Ham. Having just turned sixteen, I told my parents that I would not go to hear him."

Mighty Fighting Preacher

What attracted Billy's attention was that this preacher was a mighty fighter! Apparently, his coming to the city was to deal with a scandal which happened on the local school campus and rumors spread that some angry students planned a surprise demonstration against the preacher in front of the stage. It was this predicted event which stirred Billy's curiosity, and he decided to go just to see what would happen. In a few minutes after the evangelist began his sermon, Billy found himself, as he said, "spellbound." In some mystifying way the preacher was getting through to him, he was hearing another voice: "the voice of the Holy Spirit." From that night, the young Billy Graham became a faithful attendant and never missed a night of the revival.

There was something so powerful about this preacher, that Billy was eager to hear more from him. And then it happened, sometime around his sixteenth birthday. (Interestingly, at the same age Reverend Moon

was 16 years old when he had the spiritual experience, in which Jesus appeared to him and asked him to take his mission!) On that night, Dr. Ham finished preaching and extended to him the invitation to accept Christ; Billy responded and walked to the front of the platform and accepted Christ and changed his life forever. As Billy said, “there were signs, though, that my thinking and direction had changed, that I had truly been converted. To my own surprise, church activities that had bored me before seemed interesting all of a sudden” (page 31).

From there on, God began to train Billy Graham for his preaching ministry. Billy recounted his training period in the Chapter “Called to Preach,” where he mentioned how he practiced his sermons by preaching to nature. As he said “I would paddle a canoe across the Hillsborough to a little island where I could address all creatures, great and small, from alligators to birds” (page 49). I can truly reckon with his story, which reminded me of my early years in the church and the spiritual experience I had in a park, An Hour with God chapter, addressing my message like a mighty general to millions of grass sprouts and trees that stood in attention like soldiers.

Billy Graham is truly God’s special messenger chosen for his time to serve as a forerunner to prepare the world for the return of Christ. As spiritually attuned as he is; educated in pastoral theology and hermeneutics, on Bible interpretation, Billy Graham should have sensed that perhaps, the Messiah might possibly appear in his time, and might even come from Pyongyang, North Korea, which he, himself, referred to as the New Jerusalem of the East. (Chapter titled, “Through Unexpected Doors in the 1930s”).

Sincerely! I don’t wish to accuse or offend a great man of God, like Reverend Billy Graham, but the truth of the matter, in reading Revelation 2: 17, I question whether Reverend Billy Graham understood the Book of Revelation and the prophecies contained in it regarding Christ’s Second Coming which says, “Christ will be coming from the East and that he will come with a different name!” (Revelation 2.17) Had Reverend Graham put these two prophecies together and prayed about them, God might have revealed to him something about Reverend Moon. But on the other hand, I understand, it is not so easy. Unfortunately, Billy Graham fell into the same ditch as John the Baptist. Like John the Baptist, he did not know his visitation. God had done miraculous works, pulled him out of the farm and led him to the highest mountaintop, connecting him with the world’s greatest leaders during the most crucial five decades, where he served every president in America. As the cover story of *Time* magazine said it, “From Truman to Bush II, he’s had a job no one else has ever had spiritual guide to the most powerful men in the world.”



God loved him and supported Billy Graham’s evangelical revival mission that reached hundreds of millions of people worldwide, for what reason? It was not only for preaching the Gospel to the world but most importantly, to prepare the world for the return of Christ! Particularly, to prepare America as the central Christian nation, God’s new “chosen nation” and the head of God’s providence. Like John the Baptist, Billy Graham did work with millions of people in the world and brought them to Christ, but he did not connect them to the Lord of the Second Coming. John the Baptist was the greatest spiritual leader God ever sent to earth. He lived an ascetic life in total dedication to God. Despite his high-level

education and upper class family background, he lived like a beggar and served as a respected spiritual leader, baptizing people by the hundreds of thousands. According to Jesus’ words, John was the greatest prophet amongst all prophets, but because he failed his primary mission, he became the least among prophets, and, likewise, was Billy Graham.

Unfortunately, all these great men whom God had raised and prepared with a history of great suffering of blood, sweat and tears, did not realize the specifics of their mission and ended up missing their appointed hour, as Jesus said “they did not know their visitation.” And in a sense, this is an answer to Billy Graham’s yearning question that is quoted in the back cover of his book *Just As I Am*, when he said, “I have often said that the first thing I am going to do when I get to Heaven is to ask, “Why me, Lord? Why did you choose a farm-boy from North Carolina to preach to so many people, to have such a wonderful team of associates, and to have a part in what You were doing in the latter half of the twentieth century? I have thought about that question a great deal, but I know also that only God knows the answer.”

Could it also explain why all the U.S. Presidents whom Graham served as their spiritual guide, confided to him that they felt lacking in their presidency? He said, “Every President I think I have known, except Truman, has thought they didn’t quite get done what they wanted done,” Graham said. “And toward the end of their administration, they were disappointed and wished they had done some things differently.” (*Time*, August 20, 2007) After reading this quote, I could not help but think of President

Reagan. As great a president as he was, President Reagan made a big mistake in allowing his government to sentence Reverend Moon to jail under his watch. Not enough that Reverend Moon served his sentence in the Danbury (Connecticut) Federal Prison. Even though he was innocent, President Reagan did not pardon Reverend Moon in 1986 to clear his name and nor did other presidents after him. Reverend Moon really loved America and he truly loved President Reagan and supported his election campaign because Reverend Moon believed President Reagan was the anointed man of God to lead this country and the world to peace and safety. Reverend Moon saw that President Reagan was the 40th president of the United States and that number, 40, is God's providential number! We could find the number 40 repeated in all major providential events in the Bible. Had Billy Graham understood his mission, God would have used him to do miraculous achievements in ushering in the new Kingdom of God.

As we have read in earlier chapters, God prepared these early spiritual groups in Korea to receive the young Moon as their Messiah on the local and national level. In the Western hemisphere, God had also prepared the great evangelist preacher, Billy Graham to take on the "John the Baptist mission." Billy Graham's miraculous life story had so much in common with Reverend Moon's life and ministry. Spiritually, they were like distant cousins, resembling John the Baptist and Jesus. It is really amazing how these two great men appeared to resemble each other in the way they have evangelized the world. Looking at photographs and reading through Reverend Graham's book *Just As I Am*, I cannot help but marvel at the similarity in the size of the mass-rallies or conventions these two men had gathered, drawing hundreds of thousands of people at a time who came to attend their revival conventions. Like Billy Graham, Reverend Moon had drawn the largest crowd anyone in history could accomplish. More than 1.2 million people attended Reverend Moon's "World Rally for Korean Freedom" on June 7, 1975 in Seoul, South Korea. In the United States, Reverend Moon once again drew the largest crowd at the Washington Monument and at the Yankee Stadium. Over 300,000 people attended the Washington Monument rally!

Interestingly, there is another important question to ponder. Could it be coincidence that Billy Graham's wife, Ruth, spent her teenage years in Pyongyang, North Korea during the Korean war of the 1950?! I wonder what school and church she attended when she was sent to Pyongyang, the "New Jerusalem" of the East, before the war in China? Could she have heard the rumors about this young man from Korea proclaiming himself the Messiah? Could she have talked about her years in Pyongyang to her husband or children? It would be very interesting to know. With all this in mind regarding Billy Graham's mission, I leave this subject to the readers to pray, meditate and discover the truth for themselves. As I said, I have great respect and appreciation for Reverend Graham, and there is no question in my mind, he is the greatest man of God of the 20th Century, but still thinking of the Unificationists' claims about him and his relationship with the John the Baptist mission, make one think again.