

8/30/18

What About The Two Witnesses
Rev. 11:1-14

One of the hottest and most volatile places in the middle east is the Temple Mount. which is controlled by the followers of Islam, for it is the third most holy place, Mecca being first the second Medina.

This will be the very site where the third Jewish temple will be built during the first three and a half years of the tribulation by the Anti-christ and his false prophet but God is going to have His own two witnesses to oppose them.

1. There have been two temples built, the temples Solomon's and Zerubabel's. 1Kings 8, Ezra 3
2. Herod's temple was really the temple of Zerubabel enlarged and beautified, Jesus pronounced judgment of it. Matt. 24

The third temple will be built by the Antichrist when they make a covenant with him at the beginning of the seven-year tribulation, known as the 70th week of Daniel. Dan. 9:27

1. Daniel declares the ceasing of sacrifice, implying a temple. Dan. 9:27; 12:11
2. The Antichrist will sit in the temple as God. 2Thess. 2:4
3. Jesus gave this particular sign for Israel to flee to the wilderness. Matt. 24:15; Rev. 12

So we want to look at the record of the two witnesses of the tribulation that is marked by three things. Rev. 11:1-14

- I. The ministry of the two witnesses. vs. 1-6
- II. The martyrdom of the two witnesses. vs. 7-10
- III. The miraculous raising and rapture of the two witnesses. vs. 11-14

- I. **The ministry of the two witnesses. vs. 1-6**
 - A. The inspired ministry. vs. 1-3
 - * This is the important background to the eleventh chapter of Revelation.
 - 1. John wrote, "Then I was given a reed like a measuring rod. And the angel stood, saying, "Rise and measure the temple of God, the altar, and those who worship there." vs. 1
 - a. The temple "nous" is the sanctuary proper.
 - b. The alter most likely is the brass alter for sacrifice, in the court of the priest.
 - c. Those who worship there.
 - 2. John was to exlude something, "But leave out the court which is outside the temple, and do not measure it, for it has been given to the Gentiles. And they will tread the holy city underfoot *for* forty-two months." vs. 2
 - a. The court outside the temple for it has been given to the Gentiles.

- b. They, the Gentiles, will tread the holy city underfoot for 42 months, the last three and a half years, Great Tribulation, confirmed by Daniel and Jesus. Dan. 7:25; 9:27; 12:7; Matt. 24:15-22
- d. The temple inner court of Solomon had three courts, the women's, the men and the priests. And separate from these. the court of the Gentiles with a barrier with the inscription cautioning with death whoever passed beyond it. 1Kings 6:36
- e. The time of the Gentiles began with Nebuchadnezzar and ends at the Second coming of Christ. Dan. 2; Lk 21:24
 - 1) Not to be confused with "The fullness of the Gentiles", the full number to be saved before the rapture. Rom. 11:25
 - 2) Many believe the Dome of the Rock or Mosque of Omar on the temple mount has to be destroyed so that the temple can be built on the location.
 - 3) But it is believed Solomon's temple laid north of the "Dome of the Rock", at the "Dome of the Spirit or Tablets", where there is a ten acre clearing. (Dr. Koffman)
 - 4) Putting the Dome of the Rock in the court of the Gentiles of verse two.
 - 5) Pastor Chuck believed a wall would be built between the two buildings, as Ezekiel states, but Ezekiel's temple is

- in the Millennium, not the tribulation temple, it is out of context. Ezk. 42:20
- 3. The two will be empowered by God. vs. 3
 - a. They will be enabled by Jesus, "I will give power to my two witnesses". vs. 3a
 - 1) They are God chosen individuals.
 - 2) The Law required two witnesses to establish a matter legally. Deut. 19:15
 - 3) The people would have no excuse for their rejection and persecution of the two, being liable to God.
 - b. They will be allotted a specific time by Jesus, "They will prophesy one thousand two hundred and sixty days." vs. 3b
 - 1) The word prophecy "propheteuo" means to speak forth God word.
 - a) The primary meaning is to be the mouthpiece of God, to call people back to God.
 - a) The secondary meaning is to speak future things before they take place.
 - 2) The increment of time identifies the first three and a half years, of the seven years of tribulation.
 - a) Given in various forms, time, times and half a time. Rev. 12:14; Dan 7:25
 - b) Again 42 months, identifying the last three and a half years. Rev. 13:5
 - c) The seven years is based on a 360-day calendar year of the seventy-week of Daniel, two halves. Dan. 9:24-27

- c. They will be dressed in a specific attire, “Clothed in sackcloth”. vs. 3c
- 1) This type of clothing describes the nature of their mission and preaching.
 - 2) They will represent affliction and grief over the world’s spiritual condition.
 - * “But as for me, when they were sick, My clothing was sackcloth; I humbled myself with fasting; And my prayer would return to my own heart.” Ps. 35:13
 - 3) They will be calling people to avert judgment, through repentance,
 - * “And in that day the Lord GOD of hosts called for weeping and for mourning, For baldness and for girding with sackcloth.” Is. 22:12

B. Their indestructible ministry. vs. 4-6

1. John says, “These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands standing before the God of the earth.” vs. 4
 - a. The quote is from Zechariah. Zech. 4:3, 11, 14
 - 1) The angel said, “This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel: ‘Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,’ Says the LORD of hosts. Zech. 4:6
 - 2) “Before Zerubbabel you shall become a plain! And he shall bring forth the

capstone With shouts of Grace, grace to it! Moreover the word of the LORD came to me, saying: “The hands of Zerubbabel Have laid the foundation of this temple; His hands shall also finish it. Then you will know That the LORD of hosts has sent Me to you.” Zech. 4:7-9

* The other person was Haggai.

- 3) “Then I answered and said to him, “What are these two olive trees--at the right of the lampstand and at its left? And I further answered and said to him, “What are these two olive branches that drip into the receptacles of the two gold pipes from which the golden oil drains?” Zech. 4:11-12
 - 4) Then the angel told him, “These are the two anointed ones, who stand beside the Lord of the whole earth.” Zech. 4:14
- b. These two witnesses would be filled, driven and empowered by the Holy Spirit for their ministry.
- 1) Two olive trees, a symbol for Israel.
 - 2) Two lampstands, symbolic of Gods vessels of light to the darkness of the anti-christ kingdom.
 - 3) Jesus told us that the seven lampstands are the seven churches. Rev. 1:20b-c

- 4) They stand before God, they are sent, sustained and set apart for this time and mission, just as Zechariah.
2. John says these two witnesses will be endowed with incredible divine power and authority. vs. 5-6
 - a. Their incredible power. vs. 5
 - 1) “If anyone wants to harm them, fire proceeds from their mouth and devours their enemies.” vs. 5a-b
* Elijah called fire down to consume the men. 2King 1:10, 11, 13
 - 2) “If anyone wants to harm them, he must be killed in this manner.” vs. 5c
* These two will be divinely protected by God until their ministry is finished.
 - b. Their incredible authority. vs. 6
 - 1) “These have power to shut heaven, so that no rain falls in the days of their prophecy” bringing draught.” vs. 6a-b
* The word power “exousia” means authority to act, God’s authority.
 - 2) “They have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to strike the earth with all plagues, as often as they desire.” vs. 6c-e
 - a) The drinking water that remained.
 - b) Plagues that consume more people.
 - c) Remember in the seals these had already taken their toll.
 - 3) Who are the two witnesses?

- a) Elijah for sure is one. Mal. 4:5
- b) John the Baptist came in the power and spirit of Elijah. Lk 1:29
- c) Elijah was taken up in a whirlwind, he never died. 2Kings 2
- d) Some believe Moses is the second since he appeared with Elijah at the mount of transfiguration and the miracles are similar. 1Kings 17:1; Ja. 5:17; Ex. 7:20; Matt. 17
- e) But I believe Enoch is probably the second prophet, for he also never died, I think he is the best candidate. Gen. 5:4; Jude 14, 15; Heb. 9:27

Illustration

Jeremiah is know as the weeping prophet, he suffered much in his 40 to 50-year ministry to Judah. They threatened him, beat him, imprisoned him, accused him of being a descender and traitor, but he fulfilled his ministry and no one took his life as God promised.

Application

1. People do not call themselves to ministry.
 - a. Some people think they are qualified for ministry due to a theological degree or their life experience, both are unexceptable, unless God calls and anoints you for ministry.
 - b. At times there is a great emphasis on signs, wonders and miracle to validate one’s ministry,

while ignoring all the carnality and evil in the midst of a ministry.

- c. There has been a large movement such as the Seeker Friendly and Emergent churches based on church growth methods, to trust and emphasize man's cleverness and ingenuity to build the church to run it like a secular business under corporate management principles and the integration of humanistic psychology with Biblical truth, corrupting the word of God.
 - d. Ministry is to be operated and function under the anointing of the Holy Spirit and the gifts of the Holy Spirit imparted by God to the various ministers and people in ministry for the edification of the body in love. Eph. 4:9-16
2. God calls individual into ministry.
- a. "Now in the church that was at Antioch there were certain prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, "Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." Acts 13:1-2
 - b. "This charge I commit to you, son Timothy, according to the prophecies previously made concerning you, that by them you may wage the good warfare," 1Tim. 1:18

- c. "Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands." 2Tim. 1:6
 - d. "Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the eldership." 1Tim. 4:14
 - e. Do not lay hands on anyone hastily, nor share in other people's sins; keep yourself pure." 1Tim. 5:22
3. Ministry is God's not man's.
- a. People get real territorial, when it comes to the ministry they are being used in and if someone is being raised up or show promise they feel threatened, seniority does not count in the Kingdom of God nor in the church.
 - c. The ministry and person that is anointed by God will continue on and flourish by people coming, growing and maturing in the knowledge and love of God.
 - d. God will be opening doors to minister, raising people up and providing for all He wants done, "for where God guides, he provides".

This is to be the ministry of the two witnesses!

II. The martyrdom of the two witnesses. vs. 7-10

- A. The perfect timing is given. vs. 7
 - 1. The time is given, "When they finish their testimony." vs. 7a
 - a. They are killed right on time.

- b. They have a set time to be used.
 - b. They have a set purpose for their ministry.
 - c. The word testimony “maruria” is the same for witness, they are God’s witnesses for three and a half years.
 - d. It takes place in the middle of the seven years.
 - * Chapter provides greater detail about the ministry of the anti-christ and the false prophet.
2. The person who takes their lives is identified, “the beast that ascends out of the bottomless pit will make war against them, overcome them, and kill them.” vs. 7b-d
- a. He is the beast who ascends from the bottomless pit, the abusso. vs. 7b
 - * He is the Antichrist. Rev. 17:1-2,8
 - b. He, the beast will make war against them, overcome and kill them. vs. 7c-d
 - * The word overcome “nikao” is the same as the overcomers in the seven churches.
- B.** The prophetic location. vs. 8
1. John says, “Their bodies will lie in the street of the great city which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt.” vs. 8a
 - a. The great city is described by her spiritual evil character.
 - b. Sodom represent what is abominable.

- c. Egypt represents the enemy of God.
2. John says this great city is unmistakable, “where our Lord was crucified.” vs. 8b
 - a. The city of Jerusalem is mentioned in Scripture more than any other city, next is Babylon.
 - b. Both are in direct contrast and opposition.
 - c. The city of Jerusalem is called the city of David and of God.
 - d. God delights over the city, He has chosen.
 - e. Yet the city is guilty of killing the prophet throughout her history, even as Jesus declared it and wept over her in His Triumphal Entry, giving her up till His Second Coming. Matt. 23:37-39
 - * “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing! See! Your house is left to you desolate; “for I say to you, you shall see Me no more till you say, ‘Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!’”
 3. It should be no surprise then, that these two last prophets of God should also be killed in her streets.

- a. To add to her guilt.
- b. To add to her shame.

C. The personal celebration. vs. 9-10

1. John says, "Then *those* from the peoples, tribes, tongues, and nations will see their dead bodies three-and-a-half days. vs. 9a-d
 - a. The entire world, as an example to all opposing the Antichrist and his kingdom.
 - b. Also to gawk at and ridicule.
 - c. The technology makes this is a reality, for all to see.
2. John says, "and not allow their dead bodies to be put into graves." vs. 9e
 - a. They refuse to bury them, in order to show their disrespect and disdain.
 - b. It is a form of desecration of them.
3. John says, "And those who dwell on the earth will rejoice over them, make merry, and send gifts to one another, because these two prophets tormented those who dwell on the earth." vs. 10
 - a. Because these two prophets tormented those who dwell on the earth.
 - b. They send gifts to each other.
* Like in the Feast of Purim. Est. 9:22
 - c. The phrase "who dwell on the earth" is repeated often. Rev. 3:10; 6:10; 8:13; 13:8, 14; 17:8

Hundreds of thousands Christians were murdered by Muslims in Africa and the U.N. simply drove away without helping, while hearing the cry for help as Christians were hacked to pieces with machetes. Sudan is also nothing but Christian persecution by Islam, a religious genocide. 1994

Application

1. The servants of God, walking with God and abiding in Christ, will die at the perfect time, right on time.
 - a. It is appointed unto man to die and after that, the judgment. Heb. 9:27
 - b. Jesus said, "Are not two sparrows sold for a copper coin? And not one of them falls to the **ground** apart from your Father's will." Matt. 10:29
 - c. Jesus said, "But the very **hairs** of your head are all numbered. Do not fear therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows." Lk. 12:7
 - d. The **days** of our lives are seventy years; And if by reason of strength they are eighty years, Yet their boast is only labor and sorrow; For it is soon cut off, and we fly away. Ps. 90:10
2. The Scriptures also give us council that we might fulfill the number of days on the earth.
 - a. First be an obedient son or daughter, "Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. "Honor your father and mother," which is the first commandment with promise: "that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth." Eph. 6:1-3

Illustration

- b. Second, that every young person remember they have a Creator, “Remember now your Creator in the **days** of your youth, Before the difficult **days** come, And the years draw near when you say, “I have no pleasure in them.” Eccl. 12:1
 - c. Third, listen to godly parental council, “My son, do not forget my law, But let your heart keep my commands; For length of days and long life And peace they will add to you.” Prov. 3:1-2
 - d. Fourth, ask God for perspective, “LORD, make me to know my end, And what is the measure of my **days**, That I may know how frail I am.” Ps. 39:4
 - e. Fifth, ask God for wisdom, “So teach us to number our **days**, That we may gain a heart of wisdom.” Ps. 90:12
* Then it won’t matter where you are or when you die, because you know you are walking with God in His will!
3. The question is what will people say when you die?
- a. Will they celebrate saying, ‘Thank God, he is gone, I don’t know if he will be in heaven?’ That is not good!
 - b. Will they sorrow for their great loss, because you were a person of character and a loving Christian? That is good!
 - c. Will those at work be glad that you won’t be telling them about Jesus? That is commendable!

- d. Will they celebrate your rich life in Christ at your funeral or scarcely remember anything about your life in Christ? That is your choice!
* “Precious in the sight of the LORD Is the death of His saints.” Ps. 116:15

This is the martyrdom of the two witnesses!

III. The miraculous raising and rapture of the two witnesses. vs. 11-14

- A. The short-lived celebration. vs. 11
 - 1. John says, “After the three-and-a-half days the breath of life from God entered them, and they stood on their feet.” vs. 11a-b
 - a. They prophesied for three and a half years, now they have laid dead in the street for three and a half days.
 - b. Now before the eyes of all the breath of life from God entered them, even as in the beginning God breathed into the nostril of Adam the breath of life, He is the giver and taker of life. Gen. 2:7
 - 2. John says, “And great fear fell on those who saw them.” vs. 11c
 - a. Fear of their actions taken on the two prophets.
 - 1) They could not overcome them for forty-two months.
 - 2) They were a constant reminder of the evil in the world.

- 3) They destroyed all who attempted to harm them.
 - 4) They have been laying dead for three and a half days and their bodies have begun to show visible signs of decay.
 - 5) They are seeing their color return, begin to move, get to their knees and now they are standing on their feet, “And great fear grips them!
- b.** Fear of their opposition to God.
- 1) They have heard the preaching of the two prophets about the soon return of Christ to set up the Kingdom.
 - 2) They have mocked the message of repentance.
 - 3) They have not entered in themselves and they have kept others from entering also.
 - 4) They will have to give an account for all of their life, choices, decisions, words, deeds, thoughts and motives.
- B.** The unforgettable sight. vs. 12
1. John says, “And they heard a loud voice from heavensaying to them come up here.” vs. 12a-b
 - a. They heard the words, “Come up here”.
 - b. They had spoken in God’s authority, now they respond to the same authority.

2. John says, “And they ascended to heaven in a cloud, and their enemies saw them.” vs. 12c-d
 - a. The two ascended to heaven like from the Mount of Olives. Acts 1:9-11
 - b. Their enemies saw them, like the disciple saw Jesus ascend.
- C.** The divine disapproval and judgment. vs. 13-14
1. John says, “In the same hour there was a great earthquake.” vs. 13a
 2. John says, “And a tenth of the city fell”, Jerusalem. vs. 13b
 3. John says, “In the earthquake seven thousand people were killed.” vs. 13c
* 7,000 prophets were preserved. 1Kngs 19:18
 4. John says, “And the rest were afraid and gave glory to the God of heaven”, maybe they repented? vs. 13d
 5. John says, “The second woe is past”, the sixth trumpet. vs. 14a
 6. John says, “The third woe is coming”, the seventh trumpet. vs. 14b

Illustration

Belshazzar was celebrating in his pagan drunken feast to his gods with the vessel of God. “And a finger wrote on the wall, ‘Mene, mene, tekel upharsin’, you have been weight in the scales and you have been

found wanting. And his knees smote one against another” Dan. 5

Application

1. How short-lived has been the celebration of the world, in particular the Muslim, as God has re-gathered and revived the nation of Israel.
 - a. God promised that He would bring them back, from the Law to the prophets.
 - b. God showed Ezekiel a Valley of dry bones and asked him if they would live again and the prophet said, “You alone know”, then God breathed life into them, indicative of the nation of Israel in the Last Days. Ezk. 37
 - c. On May 14, 1948 the nation of Israel declared its independence as a nation.
 - d. It has been 1948 years since Titus leveled Jerusalem, burnt and dismantled the temple, carrying its treasures, the ark and the vessels of God, killing, enslaving and deporting Jews throughout the world.
 - e. Yet the Jews have been able to not only survive the most heinous atrocities, persecutions and attempts of genocide such as Hitler’s demonic plan, but have flourished and are back in their land.
 - f. No nation, race or people have ever been able to exist without a homeland for generations.
 - g. There can only be one explanation, God, He said He would do it and He has!

2. The Christian is promised to be resurrected, even as Christ was the first fruits of the resurrection. 1Cor. 15
 - a. The body we plant is not the one that is raised.
 - b. The body planted is a natural body, the body raised is a spiritual body.
 - c. The body planted is corruptible, the body raised is incorruptible.
 - d. The body planted is temporal, the body raised is eternal.
3. The church is about to experience an unforgettable rapture from the earth.
 - a. It is called the blessed hope. Tit. 2:13
 - b. It will happen in a twinkling of the eye and we shall be changed. 1Cor. 15:52
 - c. We will be caught up “harpazo” to the clouds and meet our love one and be with the Lord forever more. 1Thess. 4:16-17
 - d. We are to comfort one another with this hope. 1Thess. 4:13

This is the miraculous raising and rapture of the two witnesses!

Conclusion

We have looked at the record of two witnesses of the tribulation, which is marked by:

- I.** The ministry of the two witnesses!
- II.** The martyrdom of the two witnesses!
- III.** The miraculous raising and rapture of the two witnesses!