

Behold | Sermons through the Revelation

Sermon #21 | Rev. 9:13-11:14 | The Sixth Trumpet, part 3 (11:3-14)

Revelation 11:1-14 | The Two Witnesses

- For verses 1-2, refer to sermon #20
- In the future, there will be a period of 1,260 days in which **my two witnesses** will carry out their assignment.
- This is the same 1,260 days as the 42 months in which the Gentiles will **tread under foot** the city of Jerusalem.
 - This is the second half of the tribulation.
 - In the first half, the Jews have built and are using their Temple and are in full control of their city.
 - In the second half, their fake Messiah shows his true colors, and allows the gentiles to enter the city and persecute the Jews.
 - The midpoint of the tribulation is the abomination of desolation, when the Antichrist sets himself up to be God. See Matthew 24:15.
- The assignment for the two is to **prophecy** (v. 3). That is, they will tell (warn) the people *in advance* of what is about to come.
- These two are described as **two olive trees** and **two candlesticks**. They are also presented as a “known fact” as **my two witnesses**.
 - They are almost certainly described in Zechariah 4:11-14.
 - The notation of the wise taking oil is an intriguing parable. See Matthew 25:4.
 - Their identity is simply not revealed in Scripture, so any estimation of who they are lies in the realm of speculation (possibly of the grandest nature).
- We are instructed that these two witnesses have total spiritual protection. The spiritual protection is displayed in physical destruction. See verse five.
- Because they have the power to shut heaven in a manner that seems similar to the work of Elijah and Moses, many have pondered whether Elijah and Moses are the two witnesses.
 - Elijah shut up the rains for 3 1/2 years (James 5:17, Luke 4:25).
 - Moses turned the waters to blood and smote the earth with plagues.
- We place the ministry of these two witnesses at the last half of the tribulation because of the wording of verse 7.
 - Because the beast does not ascend out of the bottomless pit until Revelation 17, where is given authority for "one hour" (17:12), and "makes war" with the Lamb and His followers (19:19), this verse must be a foreshadow of that which is to later occur, at the end of the 42 months.
 - Only when their 42-month ministry is complete will the spiritual protection upon them depart. When this happens, the **beast will make war against them, and shall overcome them, and shall kill them** (v. 7).
- For 3 1/2 days the dead bodies of the two witnesses will lay in the streets of Jerusalem.
 - Failure to bury a criminal put to death brings a curse upon the land, according to Deut. 21:22-23.
 - *"It is considered a matter of great shame and discourtesy to leave the deceased unburied--his soul has returned to God, but his body is left to linger in the land of the living. Even a Priest, on his way to enter the sanctuary on Yom Kippur, was commanded to render this honor of immediate burial even to a strange corpse, although he is normally forbidden to handle the remains. This is the proper honor that Jewish tradition accords those who die."*
(http://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/281551/jewish/Timing-the-Funeral-Service.htm)
- At the middle of the fourth day, things take a tremendous turn for the worse when the two witnesses are raised from the dead.
 - Just as when Jesus rose from the dead and those who crucified Him had to repent of their actions, so the world will have a “come to Jesus” moment.
 - This moment will not last long, because with the ascension of the two, judgment will come in the form of an earthquake. This also helps us with timing, since there is a great earthquake in 16:18-19, which is at the conclusion of the Battle of Armageddon.
- An amazing thing takes place: **the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven**.
 - This is more literally translated "the rest/remainder," as in Rev. 19:21.
 - However, the timing would be appropriate for a mass conversion of Jews, and thus "remnant" *could be* a valid interpretation, but not solidly verifiable.
 - In Rev. 19:7, there is a multitude who gives God glory "because the bride has made herself ready." Is this a foreshadow of that remnant? We cannot be sure.