

08 Topic: The Two Witnesses

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Tagline

Synopsis

The depiction of the two witnesses of God in Revelation 11 seems a respite from the trumpets heralding the wrath of God on the earth. It also provides some very important pieces of the prophetic puzzle and some clarifications on some aspects of timing. What is clear is where their prophesying takes place and so who it is intended for, Jerusalem and Israel. While Israel is blinded by God's Word being interpreted by the blind, God has not forsaken His chosen people and has a remnant He will call out of apostate Israel. Witnesses establish the truth of a matter when in agreement. There were hundreds of witnesses who saw the resurrected Christ by which the Gospel grew to reach the whole earth. Likewise God's two witnesses will have seen and done the works of God and are His witnesses to a blinded people at a time of great deception. They will be a thorn in the side of the Dragon, speaking the truth and leading those with ears to hear and eyes to see away from the pit into the arms of their Messiah.

For those deceived who reject their witness and warnings, the two witnesses will be enemies of the false messianic kingdom being established. They will hate God's witnesses, yet be unable to do anything about them until God's timing is fulfilled. When the false christ is finally allowed to kill them in the streets of Jerusalem, his followers will rejoice and exchange presents because that nagging truth has stopped being told by these street preachers and they can continue to go about ministering in the false kingdom they have been deceived into accepting as truth.

This study will go into the details given in this part of the vision that will also come into play with other parts of Revelation and the prophetic narrative. It provides small pieces to the puzzle that connect with other surrounding pieces and build the overall picture of the end times being revealed piece by piece, here a little and there a little.

Overview

- Introduction
- Two Witnesses
- A Physical Temple
- Two Olive Trees (Jewish & Gentile believers)
- Two Candlesticks
- Allegorical Two Witnesses?
- Powers of the Two Witnesses
 - Shut heaven to not rain in days of their prophecy
 - Turn waters to blood
 - Smite the earth with plagues
- The Bottomless Pit
- The Beast who kills the two witnesses
 - That great city, Jerusalem
- Resurrection and ascension
- Timing of their Prophecy
- Conclusion

Detail

- Introduction
 - John's vision in the book of Revelation speaks in some detail about the prophesying of two witnesses in Jerusalem at some point during the 70th week of Daniel. The two verses prior to their depiction seem to tie the arrival of these two with a physical temple in Jerusalem, given that John is told to measure it with exception of the court of the Gentiles. The end of their short mention in John's vision is immediately followed by the statement that the second woe, the sixth trumpet, is past and the third woe, the seventh trumpet, follows quickly. This will be covered in greater detail in the next study on the [seals, trumpets, and bowls](#). These seemingly little details work together with others to provide some pieces to the puzzle of the coming times.
 - But what is the purpose of these two witnesses? Why are they there and is there anything we can glean from scripture to help us understand more detail about them and their purpose during this time?

- Two Witnesses
 - A good place to start would be to look at the meaning behind the Greek *martys*, translated as witness. It occurs 34 times in 34 verses in the New Testament and 55 times in 45 verses in the Septuagint.
 - Interpret symbols from the Bible itself
 - Deuteronomy 17:6 - From the mouth of 2-3 witnesses shall he that is worthy be put to death who was wicked or served other gods, first by the witnesses, then by the rest of the people.
 - Matthew 18:16 - "...in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established."
 - Deuteronomy 19:15 - 2-3 witnesses required to bring any justice to sin committed
 - Matthew 18:16 - for any trespass against someone within church, 2-3 witnesses every word established
 - 2 Corinthians 13:1 - in the mouth of 2-3 witnesses every word established
 - 1 Timothy 5:19 - Do not accuse an elder unless before 2-3 witnesses
 - Hebrews 10:28 - those that despised Moses' law died under 2-3 witnesses
 - **John 8:14-19** - "Jesus answered and said unto them, Though I bear record of myself, [yet] my record is true: for I know whence I came, and whither I go; but ye cannot tell whence I come, and whither I go. Ye judge after the flesh; I judge no man. And yet if I judge, my judgment is true: for **I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me. It is also written in your law, that the testimony of two men is true. I am one that bear witness of myself, and the Father that sent me beareth witness of me.** Then said they unto him, Where is thy Father? Jesus answered, Ye neither know me, nor my Father: if ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also."
 - From the contextual use in scripture, a witness is one who observed a thing and are able to speak of it evidentiary. There can be good, true witnesses and wicked, false witnesses that break the commandment not to bear false witness. Given that these are God's witnesses, we know that they speak the truth.
 - The symbology of the olive tree is seen throughout scripture tied to God and His people, which would make sense as these two witnesses are depicted as two olive trees and are God's witnesses.
 - **Revelation 11:3-4** - "And I will give [power] unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred [and] threescore days, clothed in sackcloth. **These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth.**"
 - This echoes a vision Zechariah had
 - **Zechariah 4:1-14** - "And the angel that talked with me came again, and waked me, as a man that is wakened out of his sleep, And said unto me, What seest thou? And I said, I have looked, and **behold a candlestick all [of] gold, with a bowl upon the top of it, and his seven lamps thereon, and seven pipes to the seven lamps, which [are] upon the top thereof: And two olive trees by it, one upon the right [side] of the bowl, and the other upon the left [side] thereof.** So I answered and spake to the angel that talked with me, saying, What [are] these, my lord? Then the angel that talked with me answered and said unto me, Knowest thou not what these be? And I said, No, my lord. Then he answered and spake unto me, saying, This [is] the word of the LORD unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts. Who [art] thou, O great mountain? before Zerubbabel [thou shalt become] a plain: and he shall bring forth the headstone [thereof with] shoutings, [crying], Grace, grace unto it. Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house; his hands shall also finish it; and thou shalt know that the LORD of hosts hath sent me unto you. For who hath despised the day of small things? for they shall rejoice, and shall see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel [with] those seven; they [are] the eyes of the LORD, which run to and fro through the whole earth. Then answered I, and said unto him, What [are] these two olive trees upon the right [side] of the candlestick and upon the left [side] thereof? And I answered again, and said unto him, What [be these] two olive branches which through the two golden pipes empty the golden [oil] out of themselves? And he answered me and said, Knowest thou not what these [be]? And I said, No, my lord. Then said he, These [are] the two anointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth."
 - Zechariah sees gold lampstand with a bowl at the top and seven lamps with seven channels to the lamps. Also sees two olive trees by it, on the right and left. Interpreted as the two who are anointed to serve the Lord of all the earth.
- Two Olive Trees
 - Symbology of the olive tree
 - The first mention of the olive tree is actually in reference to its leaf, which told Noah that the judgement of God was almost completed and they would be able to leave the ark soon.
 - **Genesis 8:10-12** - "And he stayed yet other seven days; and again he sent forth the dove out of the ark; **And the dove came in to him in the evening; and, lo, in her mouth [was] an olive leaf pluckt off:** so Noah knew that the waters were abated from off the earth. And he stayed yet other seven days; and sent forth the dove; which returned not again unto him any more."
 - 1 Kings 6 describes the building of Solomon's temple that would stand until the Babylonian destruction of it and the city of Jerusalem. Both the two cherubim and the two doors to enter the oracle, or most holy place.
 - **1 Kings 6:23, 27, 31-33** - "And within the oracle he made two cherubims [of] olive tree, [each] ten cubits high. ... And he set the cherubims within the inner house: and they stretched forth the wings of the cherubims, so that the wing of the one touched the [one] wall, and the wing of the other cherub touched the

other wall; and their wings touched one another in the midst of the house. ... And for the entering of the oracle he made doors [of] olive tree: the lintel [and] side posts [were] a fifth part [of the wall]. The two doors also [were of] olive tree; and he carved upon them carvings of cherubims and palm trees and open flowers, and overlaid [them] with gold, and spread gold upon the cherubims, and upon the palm trees. So also made he for the door of the temple posts [of] olive tree, a fourth part [of the wall]."

- This is especially interesting given the way that Yeshua would later describe Himself.
- **John 10:7-11, 14-18** - "Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, **I am the door of the sheep**. All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them. **I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture**. The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have [it] more abundantly. I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. ... I am the good shepherd, and know my [sheep], and am known of mine. As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep. **And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, [and] one shepherd**. Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father."
- The most holy is where the presence of God dwelt among His people. In the time before the temple it was a veil that separated the presence of God from the people, then the olive tree doors, then in the second temple again a veil. It was this veil that was rent in two at Yeshua's death, showing that the relationship between God and men had been redeemed by the blood of the Lamb of God. He was the only worthy sacrifice able to atone for the separation of man from God through sin, and so He is the only door to enter into relationship once again with the Father.
- **John 14:6** - "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: **no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.**"
- But as we saw before, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are one in Spirit, yet bear witness together of truth. And so now as we await the return of Yeshua, when we dwell in obedience to Him, loving God and each other selflessly, the Holy Spirit dwells with us in our temples and comforts us through the trials of life. We as sheep that have gone astray pass through the door, which is Christ, into relationship with God. Just as Yeshua had one fold of sheep He came to save, He also had another, signifying the salvation going to the Gentiles in addition to Israel. As we will see, this matches the symbology of the olive tree referring to the natural, Israel, and the wild, Gentiles. So also the doors to the most holy that were made of olive trees also carries symbolic significance.
- Olive trees reference Israel
 - **Psalms 52:8-9** - "But I [am] like a green olive tree in the house of God: I trust in the mercy of God for ever and ever. I will praise thee for ever, because thou hast done [it]: and I will wait on thy name; for [it is] good before thy saints."
 - **Psalms 128:3-6** - "Thy wife [shall be] as a fruitful vine by the sides of thine house: thy children like olive plants round about thy table. Behold, that thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the LORD. The LORD shall bless thee out of Zion: and thou shalt see the good of Jerusalem all the days of thy life. Yea, thou shalt see thy children's children, [and] peace upon Israel."
 - **Jeremiah 11:16-17** - "The LORD called thy name, A green olive tree, fair, [and] of goodly fruit: with the noise of a great tumult he hath kindled fire upon it, and **the branches of it are broken**. For the LORD of hosts, that planted thee, hath pronounced evil against thee, for the evil of the house of Israel and of the house of Judah, which they have done against themselves to provoke me to anger in offering incense unto Baal."
- Olive trees reference Christians
 - Romans 11:19-32 - Speaking to Gentiles, there is a cultivated olive tree (Completed covenant in Yeshua) they are being grafted onto. How much more will the natural branches (Israel) be **grafted back onto their own root (Christ)**? Israel has been hardened until the fulness of the Gentiles. They were broken off in unbelief, you (Gentile Christians) stand by faith. If they don't persist in unbelief, they will be grafted back in.
 - Romans 11:19-32 - Speaking to Gentiles they were cut out of a wild olive tree (world) and grafted onto a cultivated olive tree (Completed covenant in Yeshua). Gentiles Christians live by faith and so are grafted onto the root (Christ) of the cultivated olive tree.
- The BRANCH
 - Joshua is a transliteration of Yehoshua, later shortened to Yeshua, the name known more widely as Jesus.
 - **Revelation 5:6** - "And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, **stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.**"
 - **Zechariah 3:8-10** - "Hear now, O Joshua the high priest, thou, and thy fellows that sit before thee: for they

[are] men wondered at: for, **behold, I will bring forth my servant the BRANCH. For behold the stone that I have laid before Joshua; upon one stone [shall be] seven eyes:** behold, I will engrave the graving thereof, saith the LORD of hosts, and **I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day. In that day, saith the LORD of hosts, shall ye call every man his neighbour under the vine and under the fig tree."**

- It is Yeshua's statement to Nathanael that caused him to believe. He must have understood well enough all the references to recognize Yeshua being the BRANCH that would remove the iniquity of the land.
 - ◆ **John 1:47-51** - "Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile! Nathanael saith unto him, Whence knowest thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, **Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee.** Nathanael answered and saith unto him, **Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel.** Jesus answered and said unto him, Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig tree, believest thou? thou shalt see greater things than these. And he saith unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man."
- Recall also Daniel 2 where the stone cut without hands representing Yeshua destroys the statue representing the kingdoms of men and it grows into a mountain that fills the whole earth, representing the kingdom of God.
- **Zechariah 6:11-15** - "Then take silver and gold, and make crowns, and set [them] upon the head of Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest; And speak unto him, saying, Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, **Behold the man whose name [is] The BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the LORD: Even he shall build the temple of the LORD; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both.** And the crowns shall be to Helem, and to Tobijah, and to Jedaiah, and to Hen the son of Zephaniah, for a memorial in the temple of the LORD. And they [that are] far off shall come and build in the temple of the LORD, and ye shall know that the LORD of hosts hath sent me unto you. And [this] shall come to pass, if ye will diligently obey the voice of the LORD your God."
- There is a lot of symbology John sees in his vision from Zechariah and this idea of the branch is also important in terms of the symbology of the root of the natural olive tree upon whom God's people are grafted.
- **Isaiah 11:10** - "And in that day there shall be **a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious.**"
- All the symbology, the root, the branch, the door, the stone, the lamb, the shepherd are all symbols that point to Yeshua, as does all prophecy.
- **Revelation 19:10b** - "...worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."
- It was also the oil from the fruit of the olive tree that was used to fuel the menorah, whose construction was defined in **Exodus 25:31-40** and **Exodus 37:17-24**, and was given as a statute for Israel to keep lit throughout all their generations.
 - **Exodus 27:20-21** - "And thou shalt command the children of Israel, that they bring thee **pure oil olive beaten for the light, to cause the lamp to burn always.** In the tabernacle of the congregation without the vail, which [is] before the testimony, Aaron and his sons shall order it from evening to morning before the LORD: [it shall be] a statute for ever unto their generations on the behalf of the children of Israel."
 - This menorah
- Two candlesticks
 - Two Lampstands (Jewish & Gentile believers)
 - Revelation 1:12,20 - 7 golden lampstands, which are interpreted as the seven churches.
 - So two lampstands would be the two churches, or bodies of believers, Jewish and Gentile.
 - Matthew 5:16 - Let your light shine
 - Luke 12:35 - Be dressed ready for service and keep your lamps burning.
 - Matthew 25 - 10 virgins story of trimming the lamps and ensuring oil for the sudden return of the bridegroom
 - **Exodus 25:31-40** - "And thou shalt make a candlestick [of] pure gold: [of] beaten work shall the candlestick be made: his shaft, and his branches, his bowls, his knops, and his flowers, shall be of the same. And six branches shall come out of the sides of it; three branches of the candlestick out of the one side, and three branches of the candlestick out of the other side: Three bowls made like unto almonds, [with] a knop and a flower in one branch; and three bowls made like almonds in the other branch, [with] a knop and a flower: so in the six branches that come out of the candlestick. And in the candlestick [shall be] four bowls made like unto almonds, [with] their knops and their flowers. And [there shall be] a knop under two branches of the same, and a knop under two branches of the same, and a knop under two branches of the same, according to the six branches that proceed out of the candlestick. Their knops and their branches shall be of the same: all it [shall be] one beaten work [of] pure gold. And thou shalt make the seven lamps thereof: and they shall light the lamps thereof, that they may give light over against it. And the tongs thereof, and the snuffdishes thereof, [shall be of] pure gold. [Of] a talent of pure gold shall he make it, with all these vessels. And look that thou make [them] after their pattern, which was shewed thee in the mount."

- Allegorical Two Witnesses?
 - There are some views that allegorize the two witnesses and take the symbology to mean Israel and the church. While there's obviously a lot of symbology involved in John's vision, I lean toward taking God at His Word over spiritualizing the meaning, which can introduce so many diverse opinions. I believe God's Word is meant to be taken as stated, the whole of it. Some things you will not understand until paired with other understanding, but what is said is meant, even if said through heavy use of symbols.
 - Firstly, we are told they will prophesy for 1,260 days clothed in sackcloth. Now we could try and take that to be allegory, in which case there's many possible interpretations I'm sure. But recall John was just told to measure a physical temple in Jerusalem where Jerusalem would be trampled for 42 months. We're given symbolism to describe these two, but should that extend to symbolizing what they are said to be wearing?
 - Next, we are told that these two are killed by the beast in Jerusalem and their bodies are left in the public square for 3 1/2 days. These seem like a lot of very specific and explicit statements tied to a plain reading of two physical people who are alive and prophesying for 1,260 days, are killed, and resurrected after 3 1/2 days and taken to heaven in a cloud and their enemies see them go. They had just been celebrating their deaths a few days earlier and none of this sounds like an allegory to me.
 - Additionally as we will see the timing of the start and end of their prophecy does not coincide with a symbolic catching away of the bride. Their ministry ends after the wrath of God has begun and the catching away of the bride of Christ and protection and sealing of Israel in the wilderness all takes place before the first trumpet is blown. These two witnesses seem to be just what they are stated to be, two men who are witnesses of God's design and a confirmation to Israel in Jerusalem that they are being deceived by a false christ and need to turn to the true Messiah.
- Powers of the Two Witnesses
 - Shut heaven to not rain in days of their prophecy
 - Turn waters to blood
 - Smite the earth with plagues
- In addition to Revelation 11, the following passages give a clue as to the purpose of the two witnesses during their prophesying. They are likely justifying the coming judgments by establishing the reasons for the judgments.
 - Deuteronomy 17:6 - From the mouth of 2-3 witnesses shall he that is worthy be put to death who was wicked or served other gods, first by the witnesses, then by the rest of the people.
 - Deuteronomy 19:15 - 2-3 witnesses required to bring any justice to sin committed
 - Matthew 18:16 - for any trespass against someone within church, 2-3 witnesses every word established
 - 2 Corinthians 13:1 - in the mouth of 2-3 witnesses every word established
 - 1 Timothy 5:19 - Do not accuse an elder unless before 2-3 witnesses
 - Hebrews 10:28 - those that despised Moses' law died under 2-3 witnesses
- Chuck Missler: Three were expected by the Jews (John 1:20,21, Talmudic expectations, etc.)
 - Messiah - Malachi 3:1-3,5-6
 - Elijah - Malachi 4:5,6 (Last words in the Old Testament)
 - Moses - Deuteronomy 18:15-19
- Bottomless pit
 - The translation "bottomless" comes from the Greek *abyssos*, which occurs 9 times in 9 verses in the New Testament. It is sometimes translated as "bottomless pit" and other times the Greek *phrear* follows it, meaning pit, or well.
 - But there always has to be a bottom to a pit right? Where is the only place on earth where no matter what direction you walk you are going South? The North Pole. Likewise where is the only place on earth where no matter what direction you go it is up? The center of the earth. By definition when you are at the center of the earth there is no bottom because any direction you would go is up from there. As we will see this has relevance to understanding an important idiom.
 - The Fifth seal
 - Reminder where we are at in the sequence of events
 - **Revelation 9:1-2, 11** - "And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the **bottomless**[G12 - *Abyssos*] pit. And he opened the **bottomless**[G12 - *Abyssos*] pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit. ... And they had a king over them, [which is] the angel of the **bottomless pit**,[G12 - *Abyssos*] whose name in the Hebrew tongue [is] Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath [his] name Apollyon."
 - The Two Witnesses
 - **Revelation 11:7** - "And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the **bottomless pit**[G12 - *Abyssos*] shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them."
 - The Beast that was and is not
 - **Revelation 17:7-8** - "And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns. The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the **bottomless pit**,[G12 - *Abyssos*] and go into perdition: and they that

- dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is."
- Binding of the Dragon for 1,000 years
 - **Revelation 20:1-3** - "And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit[\[G12 - Abyssos\]](#) and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, And cast him into the **bottomless pit**,[\[G12 - Abyssos\]](#) and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season."
 - **Isaiah 14:12-17** - "How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! [how] art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High. **Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell**[\[H7585 - Sheol\]](#), to the sides of the pit. They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee, [and] consider thee, [saying, Is] this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms; [That] made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof; [that] opened not the house of his prisoners?"
 - Beast vs. Angel
 - Ascending from bottomless pit an idiom to resurrection
 - Abyssos is also found in the [Septuagint 36 times in 34 verses](#), primarily translated there as "deep" or "depth." So while it doesn't have the same prophetic connotation as the New Testament uses, it evokes the same imagery, the depth.
 - Sheol = Hell - the place of the dead
 - **Job 11:7-8** - "Canst thou by searching find out God? canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection? [It is] as high as heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than **hell**[\[H7585 - Sheol\]](#); what canst thou know?"
 - **Job 17:13-16** - "If I wait, the grave [is] mine house: I have made my bed in the darkness. I have said to corruption, Thou [art] my father: to the worm, [Thou art] my mother, and my sister. And where [is] now my hope? as for my hope, who shall see it? They shall go down to the bars of the **pit**[\[H7585 - Sheol\]](#), when [our] rest together [is] in the dust."
 - **Proverbs 1:10-12** - "My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not. If they say, Come with us, let us lay wait for blood, let us lurk privily for the innocent without cause: Let us swallow them up alive as the **grave**[\[H7585 - Sheol\]](#); and whole, as those that go down into the pit:"
 - **Psalms 86:12-13** - "I will praise thee, O Lord my God, with all my heart: and I will glorify thy name for evermore. For great [is] thy mercy toward me: and thou hast delivered my soul from the lowest **hell**[\[H7585 - Sheol\]](#)."
 - **Psalms 16:8-10** - "I have set the LORD always before me: because [he is] at my right hand, I shall not be moved. Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope. For thou wilt not leave my soul in **hell**[\[H7585 - Sheol\]](#); neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption."
 - **Luke 8:26-33** - "And they arrived at the country of the Gadarenes, which is over against Galilee. And when he went forth to land, there met him out of the city a certain man, which had devils long time, and ware no clothes, neither abode in [any] house, but in the tombs. When he saw Jesus, he cried out, and fell down before him, and with a loud voice said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, [thou] Son of God most high? I beseech thee, torment me not. (For he had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. For oftentimes it had caught him: and he was kept bound with chains and in fetters; and he brake the bands, and was driven of the devil into the wilderness.) And Jesus asked him, saying, What is thy name? And he said, Legion: because many devils were entered into him. And they besought him that he would not command them to go out into the **deep**[\[G12 - Abyssos\]](#). And there was there an herd of many swine feeding on the mountain: and they besought him that he would suffer them to enter into them. And he suffered them. Then went the devils out of the man, and entered into the swine: and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the lake, and were choked."
 - Heart of the Earth - Yeshua
 - **Matthew 12:38-41** - "Then certain of the scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we would see a sign from thee. But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas: For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas [is] here."
 - **Jonah 2:1-6** - "Then Jonah prayed unto the LORD his God out of the fish's belly, And said, I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the LORD, and he heard me; **out of the belly of hell**[\[H7585 - Sheol\]](#) cried I, [and] thou heardest my voice. For thou hadst cast me into the deep, in the midst of the seas; and the floods compassed me about: all thy billows and thy waves passed over me. Then I said, I am cast out of thy sight; yet I will look

again toward thy holy temple. The waters compassed me about, [even] to the soul: the depth closed me round about, the weeds were wrapped about my head. I went down to the bottoms of the mountains; the earth with her bars [was] about me for ever: yet hast thou brought up my life from corruption, O LORD my God."

- **Romans 10:4-7** - "For Christ [is] the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them. But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down [from above]:) Or, Who shall descend into the deep? [[G12](#) - *Abyssos*] (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.)"
 - So we can see that sheol, or hell, is synonymous with the place of the dead in the depths of the earth. There are only a few cases where this symbology is used to depict ascension from the bottomless pit, or hell, and that was first seen with Jonah foreshadowing the resurrection of Yeshua, where He likewise spend three days and nights in the heart of the earth before ascending in the resurrection into His celestial, eternal body.
 - Finally, we see this idiom of the beast, the false christ, depicted symbolically as the head that was, is not, and ascends from the bottomless pit.
- The Beast who kills the two witnesses
 - While we are not explicitly told when the start of their ministry in the prophetic narrative, the death of the two witnesses and the length of their ministry are detailed. Yet there are still various possibilities to be considered regarding the timing of the end of their ministry.
 - Probably the biggest clue to the timing of their death comes in the context of where they are introduced, between the 2nd and 3rd woe, the 6th and 7th trumpets.
 - **Revelation 11:11-14** - "And after three days and an half the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them. And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them. And the same hour was there a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell, and in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand: and the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven. The second woe is past; and, behold, the third woe cometh quickly."
 - While this doesn't clarify whether it is the king of the demon locusts or the false christ since it would take place after both are on the scene, it does seem pretty clear that the end of the 2 witnesses falls toward the end of the 70th week if indeed it is placed where it is as an order of sequence.
 - Revelation 9:1,11 The beast from the bottomless pit Abaddon, the king over the demon locusts and angel of the bottomless pit?
 - The 5th trumpet king over the demon locusts and angel of the bottomless pit is not described as a "beast," but does explicitly come from the bottomless pit.
 - The idea of this king of the locusts and his coming from the bottomless pit is really the only connecting elements.
 - The "beast" could be the false prophet, who comes from the earth. Revelation 13:11
 - The fact that this beast is from the earth is really the only connection besides being called a beast.
 - The "beast" could be the false christ, who is represented by the 7th head that is killed and becomes the 8th.
 - This view looks at the depiction of Christ, upon His death, going to the heart of the earth for 3 days and nights as Jonah was in the belly of the fish for 3 days and nights.
 - This connection to dying and going to the heart of the earth and then in resurrection coming out of the heart of the earth could be what's represented about the coming out of the bottomless pit.
 - Just as the North Pole is the one place on earth where no matter what direction you walk you are going South, so too is the center of a sphere a bottomless pit where no matter what direction you go you are going up.
 - If sheol, or hell, is truly physically and/or spiritually connected to the bottomless pit at the heart of the earth, then it would follow that the beast of Revelation 13 and 17 who receives a deadly wound that is healed and is the 7th head that becomes the 8th in that transition, would indeed be the beast that ascends from the bottomless pit and kills the two witnesses.
 - That great city, Jerusalem
 - This is an important part of recognizing Jerusalem as mystery Babylon in prophecy, which leads to greater understanding of the kind of deception mankind will be facing in the coming years. It's a deception so unexpected that until it unfolds many will not think it possible, and indeed many will actively reject its possibility for fear of the Genesis 12:1-3 curse. However, let us not forget Luke 6:27-36, Romans 12:14, and 2 Timothy 3:16-17, for all scripture is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness. One can see a deception unfold and reject the deception while loving the deceived.
- Resurrection and ascension
 - The two witnesses would seem to have their own bottomless pit ascension moment after 3 1/2 days lying in the streets of Jerusalem
- Timing of their prophecy

- The two witnesses will likely arrive on the scene during the first half of the 70th week and be speaking the truth of God's Word to those that hear it. I suspect that they would arrive with the dedication of the temple and near it warn the people, most of whom will ignore them, but those who are written in the book will hear and when the revealing of the man of sin happens at the abomination of desolation, those who heeded the warning will run for the mountains and be taken to the wilderness and protected from the dragon.
- Overview Timeline
 - The arrival and departure of the two witnesses are well defined, however there are some questions about the timing of that arrival and departure. What we do know is that they prophesy for 1,260 days. The start and end of that period of time will be represented in the timeline by the two primary views.
- It would seem that the beast who kills them being tied to his resurrection, ascending out of the bottomless pit, would put their deaths after the middle of the 70th week of Daniel. Since their prophecy lasts for 1,260 days, 3 1/2 years, this means their period of time is disconnected from the other times tied to the time starting at the abomination of desolation.
- It could be that it is immediately after his resurrection that he kills the two witnesses. The abomination of desolation, which follows his resurrection, takes place 1,290 days before the end of the 70th week, so if their prophecy began at the start of the 70th week, there is a 30-day period after the abomination of desolation that would complete their 1,260 days.
 - This would also seem to coincide approximately with the timing of Christ's return in glory to gather His elect, meaning their resurrection would potentially coincide with the rest of the dead in Christ.
- If we are to assume the angel of the bottomless pit and the locust king is their killer and not the beast, then it wouldn't be until after the fifth trumpet that they would be killed, likely well into the second half of the 70th week and at least 5 months before the end of it since the fifth trumpet is 5 months of torment for those without the seal of God who are stung by the demon locusts.
- Personally, I lean toward the false christ killing them, not the angel of the bottomless pit, yet not immediately after his resurrection. There is a good reason to place their death and resurrection after the fifth trumpet and before the seventh.
 - While it is true that there are aspects of Revelation that seem to go forward and backward in time, there is a definite progression through time from the beginning of Revelation to the end. I think the text is fairly clear when it is making a point by looking back at something again and when it is progressing through the sequence of events.
 - To that end, recall that between the fifth and sixth trumpets, the first and second woes, the statement is made.
 - **Revelation 9:12** - "One woe is past; [and], behold, there come two woes more hereafter."
 - It then progresses to describe the sixth trumpet before John is given the little book to eat, something that happened with Ezekiel before. This little book is reminiscent of the scroll written on both sides and sealed with seven seals that Yeshua was worthy to open and speaks to the progression of breaking the seals to being able to open the scroll full of lamentations and woe of the wrath of God. Similarly both Ezekiel and John are told to eat this scroll that is sweet in their mouth, but bitter in their stomachs. This speaks to the desire for righteous justice and the realization upon digestion of what that really means.
 - **Ezekiel 2:9-3:9** - "And when I looked, behold, an hand [was] sent unto me; and, lo, a roll of a book [was] therein; And he spread it before me; and it [was] written within and without: and [there was] written therein lamentations, and mourning, and woe. Moreover he said unto me, Son of man, eat that thou findest; eat this roll, and go speak unto the house of Israel. So I opened my mouth, and he caused me to eat that roll. And he said unto me, Son of man, cause thy belly to eat, and fill thy bowels with this roll that I give thee. Then did I eat [it]; and it was in my mouth as honey for sweetness. And he said unto me, Son of man, go, get thee unto the house of Israel, and speak with my words unto them. For thou [art] not sent to a people of a strange speech and of an hard language, [but] to the house of Israel; Not to many people of a strange speech and of an hard language, whose words thou canst not understand. Surely, had I sent thee to them, they would have hearkened unto thee. But the house of Israel will not hearken unto thee; for they will not hearken unto me: for all the house of Israel [are] impudent and hardhearted. Behold, I have made thy face strong against their faces, and thy forehead strong against their foreheads. As an adamant harder than flint have I made thy forehead: fear them not, neither be dismayed at their looks, though they [be] a rebellious house."
 - After this reminder of the scroll of judgement in the midst of the ongoing judgement, we see the depiction of the temple and two witnesses. It is after the two witnesses are resurrected that a similar statement is made as before regarding the woes, that the second woe, the sixth trumpet, is past and the third woe, the seventh trumpet comes quickly.
 - **Revelation 11:14** - "The second woe is past; [and], behold, the third woe cometh quickly."
 - This seems a pretty strong statement that the death and resurrection of the two witnesses, and therefore the end of their 1,260 days, takes place some time in the midst of the second half of the 70th week of Daniel. This also means that their prophecy began sometime in the midst of the first half of the 70th week.
 - Given the connection of the measuring of a physical temple tied to the introduction of the two witnesses, it is my belief that their prophecy will begin at the dedication of the third temple. They will speak the truth of God in the midst of the people of Israel, many of whom are sincerely seeking the Lord with their hearts. They will also be

hated by many, seen as proselytizing to the Gospel of Yeshua as the zeal of ministry at the temple is growing in Jerusalem. It is likely not until the abomination of desolation that some of the more severe plagues will take place as only those who have accepted the false christ fully will remain in Jerusalem as the rest are purged to keep its false holiness, in accordance with keeping up the deception of being the promised messiah. [Isaiah 4:3-4](#)

- Timing the start of their ministry
 - Because we know they prophesy for 1,260 days, we can roll back the time from their deaths and resurrections to understand more about the start of their ministry in relation to the 70th week of Daniel.
 - At arrival of the false prophet
 - A kind of combination of the idea of the false prophet and false christ, the beast that kills them would be the resurrected false christ after the dragon gives him his power and authority. This would place the time of their demise at some point after the abomination of desolation when the false christ would be resurrected and the world is wondering after him.
 - As will be covered in greater detail in the [Framework of the End](#) study, there are certain possible alignments with this sequence of events and the spring appointed times that would tie in the 1,260 days to the fall appointed times.
 - As will be covered in greater detail in the [Man of Sin: False Christ](#), there is a traditional Jewish belief that Elijah will come before the Messiah to prepare the way for him. The fulfillment of that with John the Baptists is hid from their eyes and so they await it still. Some expect Elijah to prepare the way with the contents of the Ark of the Covenant to turn the hearts back to God followed closely by the Messiah to rebuild the temple and lead Israel as her king, conquering her enemies and bringing peace.
 - This would bring the two witnesses on the scene at the same time as the false prophet, voices of truth amidst the lies presenting God's perspective for those with ears to hear. This could be tied to the time around the spring feasts.
 - What's even more intriguing is that 1,260 days from the spring appointed times falls around the fall appointed times 3.5 years later. Their death and resurrection in Jerusalem may line up with the idea that the dead are raised first, then we are alive and remain are changed.
 - [1 Corinthians 15:52](#) - "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed."
 - [1 Thessalonians 4:16-17](#) - "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."
 - [Matthew 24:30-31](#) - "And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other."
 - Could their arrival coincide with the beginning of the deception and their demise and resurrection coincide with the blessed hope of the resurrection of the dead and our catching away at the fulfillment of the foreshadow of Yom Teruah?
 - The primary reason to discount this view is where the depiction of the two witnesses and their deaths are placed in the timeline.
 - So if their death is between the 2nd and 3rd woe, the 6th and 7th trumpets:
 - This would place the start at some point in the midst of the first half of the 70th week, likely toward the end. Perhaps it would be tied to the dedication of the third temple when they would begin their ministry as it may take some time to prepare its location and setup either a tabernacle or actually build a temple of stone.
 - One possible connection to their arrival with the temple is the fact that they are introduced after John is told to measure the temple. While this is an interesting possibility, it's really not a solid case at all.
 - The bottom line is that while we know there is precision in the length of their testimony, the beginning and ending of that testimony may not be known for sure until we see two witnesses clothed in sackcloth prophesying in Jerusalem.
- The case for Elijah
 - 1 Kings 17:1 & 18:1 - Elijah, by the word of the Lord, held back rain for over 3 years. Revelation 11:6
 - 1 Kings 19 - Elijah, fleeing from Jezebel, went into the wilderness 40 days and 40 nights to Horeb, the mount of God. God spoke to Elijah in a still, small voice. God has kept 7,000 in Israel who have not bowed to Baal and Elisha accepts the mantle of Elijah.
 - Is there any kind of association between Elijah and a ram in scripture or [Rabbinic tradition](#)?
 - "the final deliverance by Elijah for ever break the yoke of all foreign rule. The allusion here is to the part which Elijah was expected to take in the future wars of Gog and Magog' (Seder Olam R. c. xvii.)"
 - Could it be that the 2 horns represent 2 people, the counterfeit Moses and Elijah that coincides with God's two

witnesses, the actual Moses and Elijah?

- "Considering this parallelism between them, the occurrence of the somewhat difficult expression will scarcely surprise us, that in the days of the Messiah Moses and Elijah would come together - as one' (Debar. R.3, at the end)."
- Malachi 4:5 - God will send Elijah before the great and terrible day of the Lord and he will turn the hearts of children to parents
- Matthew 17:10-13 - Elijah must come first, Yeshua describes and disciples recognize Elijah as John the Baptist
- Luke 1:13,17 - Zechariah was told to name his son John and he will go before the Lord in the spirit and power of Elijah and he will turn the hearts of children to parents
- Luke 4:24-26 - In the days of Elijah, "the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land"
 - Revelation 11:3 - "And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth."
- Chuck Missler: Elijah's ministry was interrupted when God took him.
- It would also seem important that the actual Elijah, prophesying by and acting through the Spirit of God at this time, would be standing against the false prophet who is pretending to be Elijah to deceive Israel.
- The case for Moses
 - Exodus 3:1 - Moses leads the flock to Horeb (Sinai) in Midian
 - Exodus 17:6 - Rock in Horeb (Sinai) that is smitten and water comes out for the people to live
 - Deuteronomy 4:10-14 - Israel at Horeb (Sinai) agreed to God's covenant with them.
 - Exodus 19:1-9 - In the wilderness of Sinai Israel camped before the mount and God said, "if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people" and the elders speaking for the people said, "All that the LORD hath spoken we will do."
 - 10 plagues in Egypt - turned Nile to blood
 - Chuck Missler: Moses ministry was interrupted when he was blocked from entering the promised land.
 - Jude 1:9 - "Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee."
 - Why was the devil contending with Michael the archangel over the body of Moses?
- The transfiguration
 - Mark 9:1-5 - "And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power. And after six days Jesus taketh [with him] Peter, and James, and John, and leadeth them up into an high mountain apart by themselves: and he was transfigured before them. And his raiment became shining, exceeding white as snow; so as no fuller on earth can white them. And there appeared unto them Elias with Moses: and they were talking with Jesus. And Peter answered and said to Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias."
 - Matthew 17:1-13, Mark 9:1-13 - Yeshua is transfigured and speaks with Moses and Elijah.
 - Malachi 4 - "Remember ye the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, [with] the statutes and judgments. Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD: And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse."
 - The prophecy of the forerunner to the Messiah coming in the power of Elijah fulfilled
 - ◆ Matthew 11:11-15, Mark 8:27-28 - Yeshua asks Peter who He is, some say Elijah
 - ◆ Matthew 16:13-14
 - ◆ Luke 1:13-17 - Promise to Zechariah of his son John coming in spirit of Elijah
 - ◆ Luke 9:7-9 - Herod heard that John was raised from the dead because of the reports that Elijah had appeared when referring to Yeshua.
 - Literal fulfillment in the end times in the form of the two witnesses
 - ◆ If Elijah is one of the two witnesses, then indeed he will come before the day of the Lord to speak the truth and lead the people with ears to hear to the truth.
 - The false prophet coming as the forerunner to the antichrist pending
 - ◆ It is possible that one coming with the supernatural abilities to call fire from heaven and raise the dead could be used as a deception along with the defeating of Israel's enemies to deceive Israel to follow after yet another false god.
 - Conclusion
 - While there are still things that remain unclear with multiple possibilities, one thing is clear. God will not leave anyone with an excuse during the time of the end. With the Dragon's deception He will send His two witnesses.
 - Personally, I've settled on Moses and Elijah and as far as the timing there seems to be a strong case for their time spanning from the midst of the first half to the midst of the second half.

May God continue to bless you as you remain in Him.

Associated studies

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References

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Associated Dates

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Script

Elijah

I heard an interesting podcast episode recently, [The Prophet Elijah Will Arrive BEFORE the Day of the Lord](#), that mentioned a couple things that resonated. He covers:

1. Jesus envisioned his ministry in two phases, his first and second coming.
2. Gabriel's statement about John the Baptist indicates that he was not the intended fulfillment of Elijah's coming.
3. John the Baptist himself explicitly stated that he is not Elijah.
4. Elijah may be one of the two witnesses, who will arrive in the future.
5. Elijah never experienced death, which may suggest a future coming.
6. The conjunction of Elijah and the Transfiguration, which was a preview of Jesus' second coming, connects Elijah with Christ's second coming.

Below is not entirely what was discussed, but some of the points in my own words with some additional thoughts.

Malachi 4:5-6

Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD: And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.

This clearly seems to tie Elijah before the day of the Lord. But wasn't John the Baptist Elijah?

Matthew 11:12-15

And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force. For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. And if ye will receive [it], this is Elias, which was for to come. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

Luke 1:13-17

But the angel said unto him, Fear not, Zacharias: for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John. And thou shalt have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth. For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb. And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God. And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.

It's one thing to come in the spirit of Elijah and another to be Elijah. If you do a word study on the day of the Lord, this was clearly not at Christ's first coming, but it will be tied to His second. I do believe we have evidence from the two witnesses that would imply one being Elijah.

My personal thought is that the two witnesses will arrive sometime in the first half of the 70th week, probably around the time of the temple dedication speaking the truth about Christ and providing a warning, the Gospel, to love God and each other, the truth basically. 1260 days later they will be killed in Jerusalem, which is why I think their arrival will be God speaking truth through them so

they are without excuse who choose the antichrist.

Interestingly, I think it's possible that the dragon's false prophet may claim to be Elijah and if Christ's second coming is the fulfillment of the fall feasts like His first was the fulfillment of the spring, the 70th week of Daniel would begin during Unleavened Bread 3.5 years before. Jewish tradition leaves a place setting empty for Elijah to come at this time of year. How appropriate would it be for the false prophet to arrive and prepare the way for the false christ at the beginning of the week when tradition, not scripture, expects it? That along with many of the signs and wonders might deceive many Jews into believing it is Elijah, coming when they expect, and pointing to a leader who is making the temple possible again, defeating their enemies, and seeming to fulfill certain prophecies that can be read several ways.

Matthew 17:1-3

And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart, And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light. And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him.

It seems clear that both Moses and Elijah have some participation in God's plan. I believe it may be that John came in the spirit of Elijah preparing the way for the True Messiah, but the actual Elijah will come with Moses perhaps to stand before Israel in Truth and power. So the true Elijah will be paired with another, likely Moses, performing the same miracles they were known for from history.

I believe the false prophet may appear to come in the spirit of Elijah by himself, a kind of false John the Baptist, seeming to have some of the power of Elijah to deceive Israel.

Revelation 13:11-14

And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon. And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him (spacial, not temporal), and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by [the means of] those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live.

Given that Elijah also brought several people back to life, God may use this as the great delusion when the deadly wound is healed, seeming to have been accomplished by the false Elijah, yet truly by God so that those who wanted to believe the lie would.

It seems fitting for Satan to use deception to effectively break off the natural branches from the root, cutting them off from God, and then using the fervent following of the letter of the Law and misinterpretations of prophecies to turn the unfaithful Israel against the faithful, families turning on each other for believing or not that Messiah has come and ultimately leading to those that choose to follow and obey the antichrist killing their own people at his command. If they truly believe he is the messiah, would they not do whatever he says, even if it goes against the spirit of the Law, love God and love your neighbor as yourself?

Does the dragon want to kill all God's people? Of course, but once they are loyal to him, he has already killed them eternally through his deception. Now they are his tools to accomplish his goal of wiping out all those who do not worship him and create his kingdom with the short time he has.

That's one possibility anyway as I see it, time will tell as we get closer.