

# 08 Topic: The Two Witnesses

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## Tagline

## Synopsis

The two witnesses are

## Overview

- Introduction
- Revelation 11
- Two Olive Trees (Jewish & Gentile believers)
- 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, measurable temple that John is told to measure while the verse after seems to tie their departure after the second woe during God's wrath, which will be covered in greater detail in the next study on the seals, trumpets, and bowls.
  - 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?
  - 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.
- Revelation 11
  - 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.
  - 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.
    - 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
  - Could the two witnesses refer to a group of people?

- Two Olive Trees (Jewish & Gentile believers)
  - The concept of this film is splitting the olive tree into two, Jew and Gentile. However, there is one Root which is Christ and I believe there is only one olive tree to which we all belong in the metaphors given in Jeremiah 11:16,17 and Romans 11:19-32. I'm not sure I take it to groups of people, which also doesn't seem to fit other timelines of the beast, harpazo, AoD, etc. It's still accurate in its referring to God's view of Israel's unbelief and blindness with passages laying it out from the old and new testaments.
    - Was thinking perhaps this would be group of people who come to belief after the harpazo, but the 2 witnesses prophesy 3 1/2 years so this group would have to be before the AoD at some point and are killed, ending the 3 1/2 years after the harpazo. This could be resolved in this world I suppose by the group starting before the AoD and taken in the harpazo and then that triggers belief and another group of believers take the mantle until the 3 1/2 years is completed?
  - Zechariah 4:1-14 - 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 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
  - Olive trees reference Israel
    - Jeremiah 11:16,17 - Calling for repentance of Israel. The Lord called you a thriving olive tree with fruit and beautiful, but with the roar of a mighty storm He will set it on fire, and **its branches will be broken**. The Lord planted you but because Israel and Judah have done evil, He decreed disaster for you.
    - 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.
  - Olive trees reference Christians
    - 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 passage make it clear the two witnesses are in Jerusalem and their bodies are left in the public square for 3 1/2 days. If this is a whole group of believers, Jew and Gentile, how do they fit in the public square in Jerusalem, or is it representatives of these bodies there?
- 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
- The Beast who kills the two witnesses
  - While we are not explicitly told when the start of their ministry in 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.
- 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 sackloth 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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## Tags

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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 a 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.