

BOOK OF REVELATION



15. The Two Witnesses

Revelation 11

Introduction

Everyone is fascinated to know what will happen in the future. As Christians we are not to turn to horoscopes or fortunetellers, but God has given us the information He wants us to know in His Word. This is why these visions were given to the Apostle John. They are a warning to man of impending judgment and also an encouragement to God's people that His Kingdom will be established. One of the difficulties in studying the book of Revelation though, is the different interpretations of these visions. The important thing is that we have an overall picture of events and prepare ourselves for the coming of the Lord. Last week we looked at the vision of the Mighty Angel with the little scroll, and tonight we will look at the remainder of that vision.

Scripture Reading: Revelation 11:1-14



John is told to measure the temple and altar. Some believe the temple refers to Christians as we are described as 'the temple of the Holy Spirit', however many others take it literally, saying that the temple will be rebuilt in Jerusalem. Look at the following scriptures that would seem to indicate the vision takes place in a literal Jerusalem. Revelation 11:2, 8 and compare with Matthew 4:5, 27:52-53.



Describe the appearance of the Two Witnesses, and discuss why they are dressed like this. Revelation 11:3-6, Matthew 11:21-22

(They are dressed in sackcloth just as John the Baptist was. Sackcloth speaks of mourning and repentance. Judgment is coming and so they are warning the people to repent.)



Who do you think these two Witnesses are? Give reasons for your answer. Look at the following scriptures: 1 Kings 17:1, 2 Kings 1:10, 2 Kings 2:11, Exodus 7:17, Deuteronomy 34:5-6, Jude 9, Matthew 11:21-22

(There are various suggestions as to who the Two Witnesses are. Some say they are Moses and Elijah, and others say that Enoch is one of them. Also there are those who believe it represents two groups of people.)



It is possible that the Two Witnesses are the ones who pronounce the trumpet judgments on earth. Compare what they do in Revelation 11:6 with what happens during the Trumpet Judgments in Revelation 8-9.



Notice the length of time these Witnesses prophesy – 1260 days. Look at the following scriptures to see what other events take place during the same time. Revelation 13:5-8, 12:6, 14, Daniel 7:25, 12:7.

(During the same time as the 2 Witnesses prophesy:

- *The Antichrist (Beast) rules the world*
- *The Antichrist claims to be God*
- *He persecutes the saints*
- *The woman (believing Jews) flee to the wilderness to escape*
- *He changes times and laws*
- *The Power of the Holy People (Jews) is broken)*

We can see from this that there are overlapping events in the book of Revelation. The time period of 1260 days begins when the Antichrist (Beast) sets himself up in the Temple as God, half-way through his rule. Daniel 9:27, Matthew 24:15-16, 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4



At the end of 1260 days what happens to the Witnesses, and how does the world respond? Revelation 11:7-13. (Notice the similarities with the life of Jesus.)



Although we may not know who these 2 Witnesses are, we are all called to be witnesses. To what extent is every Christian's responsibility and protection like that of the 2 Witnesses? Luke 21:12-19

Conclusion

In the near future the events we read about in the Book of Revelation will begin to unfold. Countless millions will die during the catastrophes that take place, and many will go to hell. Even in the last days when the 2 Witnesses are prophesying in Jerusalem, God is giving men and women an opportunity to repent. Truly He is a merciful and gracious God, not wanting any to perish. Just as Hell is real, so is Heaven. Let's make the most of every opportunity to witness to those who are lost. Amen!