the two witnesses



REVELATION SERIES VOLUME 6

Gordon Lindsay

Revelation Series 06, The Two Witnesses By Gordon Lindsay

This is the sixth of a series of lessons which covers the entire book of Revelation. This volume of lessons deals specifically with the Two Witnesses. The theme of the Two Witnesses has always captured the imagination of the reader of the Bible. Two men of mysterious origin appear in the city of Jerusalem, just at the time that the Antichrist moves in a highhanded way to enslave the nations, and force them to take his mark, ere they can buy or sell. Here the Beast from the Bottomless Pit meets two antagonists with whom he has to reckon. With boldness they proclaim the message of truth and expose the diabolical identity of the Antichrist without the slightest fear. Indeed they turn the hearts of multitudes back to the living God, even as Elijah did in the days of old.

In this sixth volume, are answered questions such as these:

Who are the Two Witnesses? Is Elijah one of them?

Is the other Witness Enoch or Moses?

What Scripture shows us that the Witnesses were alive in Old Testament days?

How does the Antichrist overcome the Witnesses?

For what important reason does he allow the Witnesses to lie dead on the streets three days?

By what means does the Antichrist show their dead bodies to the whole world?

Who are the Elijah saints?

These and many other questions are answered in this book.

Published by CHRIST FOR THE NATIONS, INC. Dallas, Texas

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Contents

Revelation Series 06, The Two Witnesses By Gordon Lindsay

Contents

Chapter 19, Who Are the Two Witnesses?

- 113. John The Baptist And Elijah
- 114. Who Is The Second Witness?
- 115. What Happened To Enoch The Other Man Who Was Translated?
- 116. The Two Witnesses—Zerubabbel And Joshua
- 117. Other Witnesses
- 118. The Two Men In White Who Were Witnesses

Chapter 20, The Ministry of the Two Witnesses

- 119. Why Clothed In Sackcloth?
- 120. Do The Two Witnesses Have Converts?
- 121. Zechariah And The Book Of Revelation
- 122. Are The Two Witnesses And The Antichrist Contemporary?
- 123. How Does The Antichrist Overcome The Witnesses?
- 124. Death And Resurrection Of The Two Witnesses
- 125. The Ascension Of The Witnesses

Chapter 21, The Elijah Saints

- 126. The Elijah Saints

Chapter 22, The Seventh Trumpet

- 127. The Sounding Of The Seventh Trumpet
- 128. The Opening Of The Temple In Heaven

Chapter 19, Who Are the Two Witnesses?

> ***"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." (Rev. 11:3-4)***

Question: Who are these Two Witnesses?

Answer: The language used in this chapter refers us back to Zechariah 4, where the two olive trees and candlesticks are first mentioned in the Bible. The words, "They are the two anointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth", indicates that these were persons in existence at that time. Who then are these witnesses that were alive 2500 years ago, and today are evidently still alive, and will be ministering in Jerusalem at the end of the age?

We need not go far to find clues to the identity of the first. One of the two men who never died is Elijah, one of the Old Testament's most noted prophets. The only other prophet of that dispensation that ranks with Elijah was the prophet Moses. In many ways Elijah fulfills the description of one of the Witnesses.

1. In his ministry in Old Testament days, Elijah was Israel's greatest witness. Living in evil times, Elijah witnessed before the wicked Ahab, before the prophets of Baal, and before the people of Israel who were caught in the terrible apostasy resulting from the introduction of Baal worship by Ahab's ungodly wife, Jezebel. Defying Jezebel and her 450 prophets, he challenged the religion of Baal in the memorable contest on Mt. Carmel. Elijah, as Israel's greatest witness in the past, would most properly fulfill the role as a witness in the days of the Great Tribulation.

2. The last words of the Old Testament speak of Elijah's returning to earth just before the Great and Dreadful Day of the Lord. This is the time of the Great Tribulation, the very period when the Two Witnesses prophecy!

> ***"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." (Mal 4:5-6)***

In these last verses of the Old Testament, God makes a definite promise that He will send Elijah back to Israel just before the Day of the Lord. If Elijah is not one of the Two Witnesses, we would have to find some other individual who would

fulfill the description better. This certainly would be difficult to do. Elijah must be one of the Two Witnesses, in order for the prophecy in Malachi to be fulfilled.

3. John the Baptist, in a certain sense, fulfilled the above prophecy of the coming of Elijah, but only as a type. This is certain, for after John the Baptist was dead, Jesus said that Elijah was yet to come. “Elias truly shall first come, and restore all things.” (Matt. 17:11) We shall have more to say about this presently. Now if John the Baptist was only a partial fulfillment of the coming of Elijah, there has to be another fulfillment—since Jesus said that Elijah would come and restore all things. It is evident that when Jesus spoke this, “all things” had not been restored.

4. The apocryphal gospels, while not canonical books, nor divinely inspired, express the thinking of the belief of students of the prophecies during inter-Testament times. The Book of Ecclesiasticus teaches that Elijah will come again.. So does the Book of Wisdom. (Wisdom 44:16)

113. John The Baptist And Elijah

Question: You have mentioned that John the Baptist was a fulfillment in type of the coming of Elijah, but that his coming could not be the entire fulfillment. Is there evidence to show that there must be a further fulfillment?

Answer:

1. Certainly, John the Baptist was a fulfillment of the prophecy. The angel speaking to Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist, said:

> ***"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." (Luke 1:17)***

This is a definite reference to the prophecy in Mal. 3:4-5,

but it is also hinted that John the Baptist was not Elijah personally, but would come in the "spirit and power of Elias".

2. That John the Baptist was positively not Elijah, is certain from John 1:21. The Jews asked him if he was Elijah. Now if anyone would know John's identity, it would certainly be John himself. But he denied it was true.

> ***"And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elias? And he saith, I am not. Art thou that prophet? And he answered, No." (John 1:21)***
>
> ***This settles the fact that John was not Elijah in person. He did, however, come in the "Spirit of Elijah".***

3. This explains Matt. 17:10-13. Jesus said that Elijah had come already in John the Baptist, and that the Jews had killed him. Yet at the same time, He also said, "Elias truly shall come first and restore all things." (Verse 11) John the Baptist came in the spirit of Elijah, and this is a preliminary fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecy. However, prophecy often has a double fulfillment, and in this case Elijah is yet to come and restore all things. Since this in no sense has been fulfilled yet, it must take place just before "the great and dreadful day of the Lord", or during the Great Tribulation.

4. Thus did the Church fathers believe. Hippolytus says:

> ***"As two advents of the Lord are indicated in the Scriptures, also two forerunners are indicated; the first was John, the son of Zacharias. He first fulfilled the course of forerunner. But since***

> ***the Saviour is to be manifested again at the end of the world, it is a matter of course that his forerunners must appear first, as he says in Malachi .. . ” Chrysostom says:***
>
> ***“As John was the forerunner of the first coming, so will Elias be the forerunner of the second coming . . . Christ called John, Elias, on account of his performing the same office.”***

Jerome writes:

“Elias himself, who will truly come in the body at the Second Coming of Christ has now come in spirit through the medium of John the Baptist.”

And St. Augustine wrote:

> ***“It is a familiar theme in conversation and heart of the faithful that in the last days before the judgment, the Jews shall believe in the true Christ by means of this great and admirable prophet Elias who shall expound the law to them . .***

114. Who Is The Second Witness?

QUESTION: If the first Witness is Elijah, who then is the second Witness?

Answer: As is well known, many scholars believe that the second Witness is Enoch. The argument for Enoch has merit and for that reason, until the writer made a close study of the subject, he was inclined to think Enoch was the other Witness. Nevertheless, he was compelled to admit that there were circumstances that did not seem to fit altogether into the picture. Something seemed wrong. For one thing, Enoch came from another age altogether. But what was most important, the description in Revelation 11, seemed to fit Moses' ministry far more than it did Enoch's. So much so, that many expositors have felt obliged to identify the second Witness as Moses, although they do not seem to be able to answer the chief difficulty against such an interpretation.

Now of course the main reason Enoch is favored as the second Witness is because the Scripture declares that, "It is appointed unto men once to die and after that the judgment". (Heb. 9:27) Elijah never died. Enoch never died. But Moses died. Would it be possible that Moses who had died once, would die again? The second death is for the wicked, not the righteous!

1. But before we discuss this difficulty which seems at first glance to be unanswerable, let us notice what the Scriptures say about the nature of the ministry of the Witnesses. Moses' ministry in the Book of Exodus, was initiated when God sent him to pronounce the great plagues upon Egypt. It is said of the Witnesses that they have this same power that Moses had.

> ***"And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed. These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues; as often as they will." (Rev. 11:5-6)***

Now it is evident that part of this prophecy has a direct parallel with Elijah's ministry when he was on earth. He had power to shut up the heavens so that it rained not during his testimony. He had power to kill his enemies with fire.

But we are also struck by the fact that the other part of the prophecy speaks of that of Moses—the smiting with the plagues.

The prophecy above if it points to anyone, points to Moses as the other Witness.

2. But something else makes the evidence seem even stronger. Moses was with

Elijah on the Mount of Transfiguration! He was with Elijah in this scene which foreshadowed the coming of the Kingdom of God. (Luke 9:27) Now the coming of the Kingdom of God actually, and in fact, takes place at the resurrection of the Two Witnesses in Revelation! (Rev. 11:12-15) Why then should Moses not be one of these Two Witnesses?

Now, despite this evidence, the one reason that seems to disqualify Moses from being the other Witness, is that Moses died. It seems incompatible with Scriptural teaching that a believer should die twice and be resurrected twice. But was Moses really resurrected, or was he just raised physically from the dead, as certain other Old Testament characters were? As for example, Elijah's raising of the widow's son. Was Moses raised in a physical rather than a glorified body?

3. Now if Moses was just physically raised from the dead, as for example Lazarus was, then it is possible that Moses could be the other of the Two Witnesses. Though Moses died and was buried as the Bible plainly describes, it could well be that Moses was raised again in his physical body, rather than a glorified body. There are certain circumstances that seem to show that this was the actual case. Moses was seen on the. Mount of Transfiguration with Elijah. It must have been that he had a physical body like Elijah had. For how could he have had a glorified body when Christ had not yet died and been resurrected? If Moses was actually resurrected, how then could Christ "become the first-fruits of them that slept"? (1 Cor. 15:20) Moses therefore must have been physically raised from the dead and taken to heaven as Elijah was. His spirit surely did not come back to earth on the Mount of Transfiguration. That is what spiritualists teach, and spiritism is strongly condemned by the Scriptures.

Although the judgments fall, at the sounding of the Trumpets by the seven angels, is it not also probable that their actual appearance occurs when the Two Witnesses announce them? In other words, are not the Witnesses agents in the judgments? God said the plagues would come upon Egypt, but they only came when Moses lifted his rod. Indeed, God had to rebuke Moses once for praying instead of lifting his rod. (Exod. 14:15-16) He stretched out his hand and the waters became blood. (Exod. 7:19) The other plagues came the same way.

Moses had some very unusual experiences. His body received a remarkable quickening of Divine power on Mt. Sinai, so that his face shone with God's glory. . .

> ***"Moses wist not that the skin of his face shone while he talked with him . . . and they were afraid to come nigh to him." (Exod. 34:29-30)***

This remarkable experience of Moses' apparently foreshadowed something that God was going to do for him later on. Just as Elijah probably experienced physical transportation, before he was translated (1 Kings. 18: 12), so Moses received a special transfiguration, something similar to that which Christ experienced.

There seems to be further confirmation that something remarkable happened to Moses by the fact that from that time on, Moses' body did not seem to age. Although all the other Israelites, who were older than twenty years, died in the Wilderness, Moses lived without the natural deterioration of age. At 120 years, his eyesight was still as good as ever, and there was no abating of his natural strength!

> ***"And Moses was an hundred and twenty years old when he died: his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated." (Deut. 34:7)***

What happened to Moses at death is also another remarkable factor in the possibility that he was raised from the dead but not resurrected. If Moses was raised from the dead with his physical and not with a glorified body, then the event must have happened within a few days after his death, before physical corruption set in. Now this could not have been done if the children of Israel had buried Moses. They would have embalmed him like they did Joseph and other patriarchs. (Gen. 50:26) For thirty days they would have the body before them in mourning. (Deut. 34:8) Indeed they would certainly have taken the body of Moses with them into Canaan where God had told Moses he could not go. Therefore, God did something for Moses that He did for no one else—He buried Moses, Himself!

> ***"And he (God) buried him in a valley in the land of Moab, over against Beth-Peor: but no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day." (Deut. 34:6)***

Now Moses in many ways is a type of Christ. Moses, himself, knew he was such a type. He said this in a prophecy (Deut. 18:15), a prophecy that Peter referred to in his second sermon after Pentecost.

> ***"For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me, him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you." (Acts 3:22)***

Notice the many ways that Moses was "like unto" Christ:

1. His life was attempted at birth.
2. He tried to deliver his brethren, but was rejected as Christ was rejected.
3. He took a Gentile Bride, as Christ did.
4. He was called of God to redeem Israel, as Christ was.
5. Moses fed the children of Israel with Manna, a type of the bread of life which Christ gave.
6. He fasted on the Mount 40 days and nights as Christ.
7. His face shone on the Mount, as Christ's shone on the Mount of Transfiguration.
8. He was the great intercessor as Christ.
9. He was meek as Christ was meek.
10. He raised the brazen serpent in the Wilderness which was a type of Christ, being raised up.

These are but a few of the many ways that Moses was a type of Christ. But what about Moses being a type of the most important thing of all — the Lord's death and resurrection! Was Moses buried by God, and then on the third day raised again? The Two Witnesses died and were resurrected on the third day! (Rev. 11:11)

Do we not have at least part of the answer in Jude 9? Moses' body did not stay in the grave, although the devil evidently used all his power to keep it there. God sent Michael the archangel to see that Moses' body was raised.

> ***"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." (Jude 9)***

It is thus evident that Moses' body was raised. Michael would not contend for a dead body and then have to give up and leave it in the grave. The Lord's rebuke put the devil to flight. Satan, who has the power of death, wanted to keep Moses' body in death. (Heb. 2:14) But he failed. Moses was raised though he did not receive a glorified body like Christ received at His resurrection. How could he, when Christ is the First-fruits of the resurrection? Hence, Moses received back his physical body, rather than a glorified body. And with that physical body, he appeared on the Mount of Transfiguration with Elijah. Moses and Elijah were discussing with Christ about his "decease he should accomplish at Jerusalem". (Luke 9:31) And well they might, for both Elijah and Moses were depending on Christ's death and resurrection for their own resurrection!

And thus we see that it is quite possible that Moses could be one of the Two Witnesses, without violating the principle that a believer will not (in the sense of physical disintegration) die a second death. Moses fits into the picture far better than Enoch, and relieves us of the difficulty of taking a man who belongs to a different age and bringing him into this age. The prophecy of Revelation 11, certainly applies much better to Moses than it does to Enoch.

The evidence seems to be that Elijah and Moses are the Two Witnesses.

115. What Happened To Enoch The Other Man Who Was Translated?

Question: If Enoch is not one of the Two Witnesses, what happened to him, and what was the purpose of his translation?

> ***"By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God." (Hebrews 11:5)***

Answer: Here we see the exquisite accuracy of the Scriptures. Elijah was translated, but we are not told that he would not see death. On the other hand we have the statement that Enoch should not see death. Enoch, seventh from Adam, was the first great prophet of the coming of the Lord. He said, "Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment on all . . ." (Jude 14-15) Those raptured will as Enoch prophesied, return to earth to assist in the judgment of the wicked.

Enoch was a true type of the raptured Church, which like him shall never see death. (1 Thes. 4:13-17) They will have the same testimony as Enoch, who, "before his translation had this testimony, that he pleased God".

However, it seems certain that Enoch even as Elijah, did not receive a glorified body at the time of his translation. He could not, until after Christ's resurrection, when the First-fruit resurrection of Old Testament saints took place. (Matt. 27:51-52) His glorification at that time would make him a true type of the First-fruit rapture.

Nevertheless, while we believe that the evidence preponderates that Moses is the other Witness, we would not be dogmatic about it. A large number of excellent scholars believe that Enoch is the other Witness.

116. The Two Witnesses—Zerubabbel And Joshua

Question: Does the Bible speak elsewhere about the Two Witnesses?

Answer: Here is probably one of the most unexplored subjects of the Bible, and yet such a study is important to the understanding of the identity and ministry of the Two Witnesses. God has a principle that no man should be condemned by the mouth of one witness. Divine law requires two or more witnesses when judgment is to be passed upon a person or a nation.

> ***"One witness shall not rise up against a man for any iniquity, or for any sin, in any sin that he sinneth: at the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall the matter be established." (Deut. 19:15)***

Paul repeats this principle in 2 Cor. 13:1, when he reproves the Corinthian church, "In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established". Now the Two Witnesses of Revelation 11, are extraordinary witnesses; they are the ones who stand before the God of the whole earth. But we must not forget that God has always had those who in a special way are His witnesses for a given time and a given generation. This is brought out in the Book of Zechariah. By reading the 4th chapter carefully, you will see that Zerubbabel and Joshua were the Witnesses before the Lord in that day. God, when commissioning Zerubabbel for the task before him, declares that it may only be accomplished by His Spirit.

> ***"Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts." (Zech. 4:6)***

Like the Two Witnesses of Revelation, Zerubabbel's and Joshua's work pertained to the temple in Jerusalem. (Zech. 4) Their work was the restoration of the temple and its worship— an evident type of the work of the Two Witnesses of Rev. 11, when the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled. The setting of the golden candlestick, the seven lamps, and the two olive trees in Zechariah, answer to the same setting in Rev. 11. The Two Witnesses are the two olive trees. The Witnesses of the end-time are the "Zerubabbel and Joshua" of the final restoration.

There is one remarkable difference. The golden candlestick is missing! The candlestick pertained to the Old Testament national Church of the Jews. (Heb. 9:2) It pertains to the Christian Church in New Testament days. (Rev. 1:20) But the golden candlestick is now missing because the raptured Church has gone! It

is no longer in the world.

117. Other Witnesses

Now we are prepared to make an interesting and important observation. The Two Witnesses of Rev. 11, have a very singular and important ministry because they minister to the winding up of the events of the age, yet they are by no means the only “two witnesses” in the Scriptures. For we find in Zechariah, that Zerubabbel and Joshua were at that time “the two anointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole world”. (Zech. 4:14) They were not the same as the ones of Rev. 11, but were a type of them.

Therefore, it is evident that there are more than one set of special witnesses! The fact that we must understand is that God has never left Himself without witnesses. This has been true all down through human history. Collectively speaking, Israel and the Church have been God’s Two Witnesses. To Israel, God has said, “Ye are my witnesses.” (Isa. 43:10) To the Church, Christ said, “Ye shall be witnesses unto me.” (Acts 1:8) These two bodies have been the great collective witnesses to the world. In addition, during the various generations, especially in the days of judgment, God has raised up special individual witnesses.

God had two outstanding witnesses during the ante-diluvian period. Two men preached righteousness and judgment to come— Enoch and Noah. They were the anointed, God-called witnesses of their time. Noah was one of the “olive trees” of his day that stood before the God of the whole earth. The first thing he received from the earth after the Flood was an “olive leaf”. (Gen. 8:11)

Abraham and Isaac were the witnesses of their day. Abraham and Isaac had an unusually close bond as father and son. Yet Abraham was willing to give up his son, and Isaac was willing to die—a type of God giving His Son—in obedience to Divine will. They were the great witnesses in a day that was given over to idolatry. (Gen. 22)

Before the destruction of Sodom there went two angels to Sodom, witnesses of the wickedness of the city, yet agents of mercy to spare righteous Lot and his family. (Gen. 19)

Jacob and his son Joseph, whom “he loved more than all his children” (Gen. 37:3), were the two witnesses in the land of Egypt during the famine judgment. (Gen. 46-47)

Moses and Aaron were the two witnesses before Pharaoh in the time of the terrible plagues that judged Egypt. (Exod. 4:14-16)

Joshua and Caleb, the two faithful spies, were witnesses who brought back a good report, survived the judgment of the unbelieving generation in the wilderness, and lived to lead the children of Israel into Caanan. (Num. 14:24, 38)

Samuel, and David whom he anointed king, were the two witnesses in the evil days of King Saul. These two were the anointed of the Lord in their day. (I. Sam. 16:13)

Elijah and Elisha were the two witnesses of their time. (II. Kings 2:9) (Elijah was to become a witness, in a different relationship, at a later time.)

There were two great witnesses in pre-captivity days for the two houses of Israel and Judah—Isaiah and Jeremiah, respectively.

There were two witnesses during the captivity—Ezekiel and Daniel.

There were two outstanding witnesses after the captivity — Nehemiah and Ezra.

And, of course, the last of the Old Testament Witnesses, Zerubabbel and Joshua, the high priest, we have already considered.

It is interesting to note that when Christ called His disciples — the Twelve and the Seventy — He sent them out two by two, to witness in the towns where He was to come. (Luke 10:1)

Christ had two pre-eminent apostle-witnesses — Peter to the Jews, or the circumcision, and Paul to the Gentiles. (Gal. 2:7-8)

118. The Two Men In White Who Were Witnesses

All these we have mentioned were chosen as witnesses for a particular time in history. Now there were two special witnesses, evidently men, who witnessed the resurrection of Christ and His ascension. Luke 24:4-6, describes their visit at the tomb.

“And it came to pass, as they were much perplexed thereabout, behold, two men stood by them in shining garments: And as they were afraid, and bowed down their faces to the earth, they said unto them, Why seek ye the living amoung the dead? He is not here, but is risen:

remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee.”

Again, we are given a view of what is evidently the same men in Acts 1:10-11, as they witness the ascension of Christ. These probably are the Two Witnesses of Revelation 11. But since the Scriptures do not identify them by name, we cannot say for certain that they are.

> ***“And when they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.” (Acts 1:10-11)***

All these things teach us that God in accomplishing His peculiar work, is never without witnesses. Second, although there have been many witnesses in the various generations of human history, two special witnesses stand out above all the others. They will appear during the Great Tribulation and they are, we believe, Moses and Elijah.

Chapter 20, The Ministry of the Two Witnesses

119. Why Clothed In Sackcloth?

Question: Why are the Witnesses clothed in sackcloth?

Answer: This is an indication of the judgment times in which these prophets live. In the present days of grace, we do not put on sackcloth, nor the spirit of heaviness, but the garments of praise and rejoicing. These are the years of grace and jubilee. But the sackcloth indicates a dispensational change in God's dealings. The hour of judgment has come. Garments of sackcloth would be quite in keeping with Elijah, who was described as:

> ***"an hairy man, and girt with a girdle of leather about his loins". (2 Kings 1:8)***

Question: What does it mean that the Witnesses stand "before the God of the earth"?

Answer: Here is an expression which is apparently not used in connection with the Christian dispensation. Abraham used it when he interceded with God for Lot. (Gen. 18:25) Joshua used it when the children of Israel passed over Jordan. (Josh. 3:11)

The expression which is found in the parallel passage in Zech. 4:14, however indicates something more. The present tense was used. The Witnesses were then standing before God! Elijah had been already translated and taken to heaven. Moses had been raised from death! They were then in the presence of the Lord of heaven.

Question: What is the ministry of the Two Witnesses?

Answer: William R. Newell sums up the ministry of the Two Witnesses very well in his "The Book of Revelation".

"The newspapers and radios will one day be crowded full of this news: 'Two prophets appear in Jerusalem clothed like Elijah of old in sackcloth and crying out that judgment is at hand!'

"Day after day the excitement will increase as these witnesses give their testimony. And what will that testimony be?

1. "They will say that the Lord Jesus Christ, who has been rejected is the 'Lord

of all the earth'. They will say (as said Elijah of old, in sudden apparition, at the court of Ahab), 'As Jehovah, the God of Israel, liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word.' We see from the last phrase of Revelation 11:18, that they are addressing those that 'destroy the earth'.

2. "They testify unsparingly of human wickedness to men's very faces. You have probably never heard a preacher that told you to your face how bad you were. I hope you have, but I doubt it. These witnesses will tell to the teeth of a horrid godlessness which is ready to worship the Devil, just what they are before God!

3. "They will testify of the character of the judgments just past (chapter 6, 8 and 9) as having been directly from God, and warn of coming judgments infinitely more terrible. So did every prophet, and so will they.

4. "They will decry the blasphemous claims the wild beast will shortly be making (chapter 13), that man is to be deified! They will denounce all the goodness of man as a lie!

5. "They will testify that Jerusalem, although the holy city in God's purposes, is spiritually 'Sodom and Egypt', and will announce coming judgments upon the city and people.

They will tell the Jews that they 'killed the Lord Jesus' (1 Thes. 2:15, 16), and that He will yet be the King over all the earth."

The appearance of the Two Witnesses will no doubt, come as a surprise to the world, as did Elijah's ministry to Israel. Their origin will probably be obscure. Long ago Elijah mysteriously disappeared from the earth. Moses also mysteriously disappeared. Now they both mysteriously reappear. There is no foolishness about them. They have a mission to perform and they enter upon it without delay. They deal with the wickedness of the Antichrist's kingdom in unsparing terms. They unmask the Satanic character of the Beast and warn people in no uncertain words to have nothing to do with him. Opposition against the Witnesses will come immediately, but they meet force with force, calling for judgments such as those which fell in the days of Moses, and of Elijah. Waters are turned to blood. Fire proceeds from their mouth and destroys their enemies as it did under Elijah's first ministry. (2 Kings 1:10) The heavens are made brass so that no rain falls. Very likely they herald the Trumpet Judgments. The ministry of the super-natural comes forth as never before.

The change in dispensation is very manifest. In the dispensation of grace that we are yet in, we are charged not "to resist evil". The disciples are rebuked, when

they suggest that they call down fire from heaven, as Elijah did, upon an inhospitable city of the Samaritans. (Luke 9:52-56) But the age of grace has given way to the hour of judgment. The Two Witnesses have power to kill their enemies with fire.

> ***"And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed." (Rev. 11:5)***

Moreover, they have power to smite the earth "with all plagues as often as they will". This could mean, as we have said, although the text does not say it in so many words, that they publicly proclaim the Trumpet Judgments that are coming upon the earth as Moses did to Pharaoh. The opposers of God seem to think they are responsible. (Rev. 11:10)

120. Do The Two Witnesses Have Converts?

Question: Is the testimony of the Witnesses only of judgment? Do they have no converts during the time of their testimony?

Answer: Yes, there are many who heed their testimony. While the multitudes go on in their insane course, fatally charmed by the wiles of the Antichrist, there is a remnant that takes heed. We must remember that the testimony of the witnesses centers in Jerusalem, and it is among the Jews that their message is principally directed, although (as seen in verse 9) their ministry is effecting the whole world. At the time of their death and resurrection, we are informed that "the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven". (Verse 13) In Rev. 12:17, we are told of a "remnant" who "keep the commandments of God". Jeremiah tells how that after the Lord had scattered the children of Israel among all nations, they shall be recovered from "all countries whither I have driven them", and "they shall fear no more", and God

> ***"shall raise unto David a righteous BRANCH, and a king shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice on earth. In his days, Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely . . ." (Jer. 23:3-6)***

And this is the ministry and burden of the Two Witnesses. As Elijah was a voice that called Israel back to God in the days of his Old Testament ministry, so now his voice, and the voice of the other witnesses, thunders again. As Elijah called fire out of heaven, pronounced a drought, punished the false prophets, and called for the children of Israel to return to the Lord God, so will he do again. This work is dispensational in its importance and is described in the last words of the Old Testament. (Mal. 4:5-6) Even as John the Baptist fulfilled his ministry as forerunner of Christ's First Coming, so now Elijah and his companion come again as messengers to prepare the way of the Lord. Thus are fulfilled the words of Jesus who said after John the Baptist had died, "Elias truly shall first come, and restore all things". (Matt. 17:11) The disciples had just seen Elijah in a vision on the Mount of Transfiguration, and they understood that it was the same Elijah who would come and restore Israel to her appointed place in the purposes of God.

121. Zechariah And The Book Of Revelation

As we have seen, Zechariah is the Old Testament book which refers to the Two Witnesses and their ministry. (Zech. 4) It is of further interest to note that this same book speaks of the results of their ministry. Zechariah foresees the coming of the Lord in glory, and of the Righteous Branch who will build the temple after His return. (Zech. 6:12-13) He speaks of the restoration of Jerusalem and of the salvation of the remnant (Zech. 8:1-8), of God's turning again to the Jew, after all the centuries.

> ***"Thus saith the Lord of hosts; In those days it shall come to pass that ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nation, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, we will go with you: for we have heard that God is with you." (Zech. 8:23)***

Zechariah foretells also the rise of the False Shepherd, the Antichrist, and his doom (Zech. 11:15-17); of the gathering of the nations against Jerusalem in the Battle of Armageddon (Zech. 12:1-4); how at that time, God will deal with His people Israel, and how they will accept Christ as their Messiah. They will recognize Him, with sorrow of heart, as the One they have pierced. They will weep and mourn because of Him.

> ***"And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first born." (Zech. 12:10)***

Zech. 13, describes the repentance of Israel and the cleansing of the land. Two-thirds of the people will perish, but one-third will be left. One third, God will bring through fire, and redeem in the refining process. (Zech. 13:8-9) Zechariah closes his prophecies, with the great Battle of Armageddon, the investment, capture, and the ravaging of the city of Jerusalem, of the appearance of the Lord from glory, who smites the armies of the Beast with a consuming plague — after which, the Millennium begins.

Certainly the Two Witnesses whom Zechariah foresaw are ministers of Christ who will play a dramatic role at the end-time, in turning the hearts of the children to the fathers, and the fathers to the children. Although the Witnesses come with the ministry of judgment, they are nevertheless agents of mercy. Their

ministry in turning the hearts of the people back to God, stays the judgments, so that the earth is not smitten with a curse (Mal. 4:6)

122. Are The Two Witnesses And The Antichrist Contemporary?

Question: Are the Two Witnesses and the Antichrist contemporary?

Answer: Yes. Revelation 13:5, declares that the Beast, or Antichrist, shall have power over tongues, people and nations, for 42 months. This is the time of the Great Tribulation, when the Beast has virtually unrestricted sway over ten kingdoms, and probably over many other smaller nations. In those days, multitudes will acclaim him the world's great deliverer. The Two Witnesses appear also during the Great Tribulation, for they come BEFORE the Great and Terrible Day of the Lord, and this is the time of the Tribulation.

It should be realized that the Antichrist's rise will occupy a number of years, and at the beginning he may appear to be inconsequential figure. In fact, he may be unrecognized and rising to power some place in the world right now, with nothing about him to particularly mark him or to give warning of the terrible course he will later follow. Behind a deceptively benign exterior there will lurk the ruthless hates and fires of hell itself. The first definite confirmation of his identity, may be his covenant with the Jews, though this event probably will take place after the rapture.

The Beast's covenant with the Jews will initiate Daniel's Seventieth Week, in the middle of which, the covenant will be broken. The 42 months of the Great Tribulation follow the annulment of the covenant.

It is at this critical time that the Two Witnesses begin their special prophesying against whom the Beast becomes a deadly enemy. Eventually, when their testimony is completed, the Beast overcomes the Witnesses. The Beast is not immediately destroyed but continues a short time longer, until his defeat at Armageddon. In the meantime he and his duped followers fall under the scourge of the Vial judgments.

123. How Does The Antichrist Overcome The Witnesses?

Elijah won against the prophets of Baal during the days of the Israel kingdom, through the fire test. He said, “And the God that answereth by fire, let him be god.” (1 Kings. 18:24) When fire fell at Elijah’s command, the people fell on their faces and said, “The Lord He is God; the Lord He is God”. (Verse 39) His success in the contest between God and Baal, was the means of turning the people back from Baal worship to the worship of Jehovah.

Elijah has not lost his power to call down fire. Even as he brought fire from heaven upon his enemies in II Kings 1, so he will do again.

> ***“And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed.” (Rev.11:5)***

Now in the days of the Antichrist, the question again will be, who is God—the Antichrist or Jehovah? Who can bring fire down out of heaven? But this time the False Prophet is able to call down fire too, so the test will not be decisive. Like the magicians of Egypt who were able to imitate some of Moses’ feats, so the False prophet is able to duplicate the miracle of the fire. (Exod. 7:11-12; 8:17) The true Israel will accept the claims of Jehovah, but multitudes under the delusion of the Antichrist, will continue to follow him. Having completed their testimony, God will permit the Witnesses to be slain, to the great joy and relief of the Beast worshippers, whose rejoicing, however, will be of brief duration. Within three days of their death, an astonishing drama will unfold.

124. Death And Resurrection Of The Two Witnesses

Question: Why does God allow the Beast or Antichrist to kill the Witnesses?

Answer: Their testimony is finished, and God prepares to give the world an object lesson. He allows the Witnesses indeed to die, but it is a short-lived triumph for the Antichrist. Three days later, they are resurrected, and that in the presence of those who have rejoiced over their death. The Beast in his supreme hatred of the Witnesses, outrages all decency by leaving their corpses on the streets of Jerusalem for everybody to view. No doubt he does this so that he may absolutely prove to the people that the Witnesses are indeed slain. Bloomfield points out an interesting fact in connection with the ministry and death of the Witnesses:

> ***"The two witnesses actually re-enact the life, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus. Their ministry is three and one half years in length (approximately), the same as that of Jesus . . . The bodies of the Two Witnesses will not be buried. Antichrist will not make the same mistake that Pilate made in allowing the body to be buried in such a way that it might be stolen or otherwise disappear. This time the bodies will be left in the street for everyone to see . . ."***

As was Christ's, their bodies are resurrected after three days. Then they are caught up to heaven. Here is a re-enactment of the death and resurrection of Christ. Notice that the scene is in Jerusalem, "where also our Lord was crucified".

Question: The ninth verse says, "And they of the people and kindreds and tongues and nations shall see their dead bodies three days and a half." How could this be possible?

Answer: Well, of course it could not have been possible at any time other than that in which we are now living. But through television, which has been developed during the last two decades, it is now possible for tens of millions of people to witness, simultaneously, the same event. World television is not yet a fact, but we are told on good authority that with the launching of a relay satellite into orbit over the earth, world television will be possible in a very few years. Television, no doubt, will be fully exploited by the Antichrist in his diabolical program to impress his personality and will upon the masses. It would be a very simple matter to put the scene of the death of the Two Witnesses in Jerusalem, upon television.

Question: It is said that the people living on the earth will rejoice and make merry when this event takes place. They will celebrate by sending gifts one to another. What does this mean?

Answer: The Two Witnesses have been the nemesis of the Antichrist from the beginning of his reign. As a super-man who is able to solve the world's problems, he so presents himself to the human race. The world, appalled by the political chaos, and the threat of race suicide by atomic destruction, eagerly turns to a strong man who seems able to deal with the universal anarchy and chaos. He is recognized as the man of the hour, a man of destiny. Actually, he is Satan's supreme counterfeit of Christ. He is dedicated to the task of subverting and mobilizing all men into universal rebellion against God. World statesmen, as well as leading churchmen, to whom the prophecies are a sealed book, fall under the spell of the Antichrist's witchery:

> ***"Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie." (2 Thes. 2:9-11)***

In his moment of triumph, the Antichrist cannot refrain from indulging his hatred and contempt for the Witnesses by ordering that their dead bodies remain in the streets. No one will be permitted to doubt that they are really dead.

The followers of the Beast now celebrate an "Antichrist-mas". by sending gifts one to another. Christmas, as we know it, has long ceased with most people from being a reverent commemoration of Christ's birthday. It is now a commercialized holiday, with Santa Claus, imaginary reindeer, and an exchanging of gifts, with little worship or thought of Christ, God's great gift to the world.

In the minds of the Beast-worshippers, the Two Witnesses are responsible for the terrible plagues that have come upon them. They think of Elijah as Ahab did, "Art thou he that troubleth Israel?" Their death seems to prove the supremacy of the Antichrist over Christ. Men everywhere rejoice and make merry. Multitudes abandon themselves in an orgy of sensual delight. This is the high-water mark of the Antichrist kingdom. Unlike Mt. Carmel, where Elijah won the contest, this time the representatives of Jehovah apparently have lost. They are dead and their bodies lie ignominiously in the streets of the city of Jerusalem, mute witness to the supremacy of the Beast. But the triumph is brief. Three days later to the

amazement and consternation of the followers of the Antichrist, the Witnesses are resurrected by the Spirit of God, and ascend to heaven.

125. The Ascension Of The Witnesses

Question: What is the effect of the resurrection and ascension of the Two Witnesses upon the world?

Answer: The result is a stunning surprise. A great earthquake shakes the city killing 7000 people. There is an interesting contrast here. When Elijah was on earth the first time, there were 7000 people who refused to worship Baal. (1 Kings 19:18) Now, as the Two Witnesses ascend to heaven, 7000 of the Beast-worshippers perish in the earthquake which shakes the city of Jerusalem.

Notice a similar numerical parallel between events marking the ushering in of Law and Grace. When Israel broke the Law, given on Mt. Sinai, 3000 perished. (Exod. 32:28) When Peter preached the first sermon of Grace, after Pentecost, 3000 were converted. (Acts 2:41)

Those who believed in the testimony of the Witnesses, but who were dismayed by their death at the hands of the Antichrist, now take new courage and give glory to God. Others are frightened into giving acknowledgment of Gods power. No longer can the Messiah's resurrection be considered a myth. Two men, witnesses of Christ, lie dead three days in the streets of the city. They come to life, and in full view of all, they ascend to heaven!

The hypnotic spell of the Antichrist is broken. Nevertheless, for the demon-possessed followers of the Beast, the hour of repentance is past.

Question: The Ascension of the Two Witnesses marks the end of the Sixth Trumpet. What comes next?

Answer: After their ascension, follows the sounding of the seventh and last Trumpet. Notice again that the Sixth Trumpet does not mark the beginning of the testimony of the Two Witnesses; it marks the end. Their witnessing has gone on for three years and a half — the period of the Great Tribulation.

Question: Is the Antichrist still reigning after the ascension of the Witnesses?

Answer: The Great Tribulation, during which time the Antichrist has exercised sway over nations, tongues and people, is now over. For a number of months the judgments of God have been poured out upon the earth. The Antichrist is still alive, but his power is being diminished on every hand. Terrible judgments are being poured out on the earth. And the worst is yet to come; though the Antichrist achieved a fleeting triumph in his murder of the Two Witnesses, the fact that God publicly raised them from death, has completely frustrated and humiliated him. The world perceives that God indeed reigns, and He is reigning

in judgment.

In heaven, the Twenty-four Elders take knowledge of this in their worship, and thank God that He has taken to Himself, His great power and has reigned.

Chapter 21, The Elijah Saints

Question: You have shown that the Scriptures teach that Elijah will return to earth before the Great and Notable Day of the Lord. Is there such a thing as Elijah saints? If Elisha ministered in the spirit of Elijah, after the prophet was gone, and if John the Baptist ministered in the spirit of Elijah centuries later, what about the day in which we are living now? Will God raise up men of faith who will go forth in the spirit of Elijah to proclaim the supernatural ministry in the closing days of this age?

Answer: We are assured that God will do this very thing, and He is doing it now. God is making ready a people in this generation, who will be prepared for His Coming.

Question: Could you tell us something about the ministry, the characteristics, and the walk of the Elijah saints?

Answer: Elsewhere, I have written on this subject. As it covers the subject rather fully I will reproduce it here:

126. The Elijah Saints

Elijah saints are those who will walk with God. Their lives will be simple lives like that of Elijah. There is a false belief prevalent among some that the best way to accomplish great things is to have vast sums of money at one's disposal. Some have sought to buy influence and power through money. They think that a show of prosperity will help them to success. But these methods are the methods of men and are not the way to power with God.

Money indeed can be useful in extending God's Kingdom. Christ taught His disciples to be wise stewards, using what was placed within their hands in a prudent manner. But money can only help the cause of Christ as it is combined with prevailing prayer, with sincere devotion, with utter consecration, and with the loving sacrifice of God's people. It is not difficult for a Christian to determine whether he is using mammon for the glory of God or mammon is using him. If he falls into the temptation of lavish living, if he develops a lust for expensive real estate or desire for luxuries that the people who support him cannot have, it is quite evident that he has no great burden for the cause of Christ. Rather he is thinking of his own comfort.

Elijah lived the simple life. He did not wish to get entangled with the affairs of this life. The ruling passion of his life was to live in communion with God, to hear His voice, and to be jealous for God's honor and His Kingdom. Men who will conquer the world for Christ will be men of simple habits and simple tastes.

Gehazi thought to benefit from the ministry of Elisha by taking of Naaman's wealth. But his covetousness led to tragedy. Elisha, discerning his duplicity said, "Is it a time to receive money, and to receive garments, and oliveyards, and vineyards, and sheep, and oxen, and menservants, and maidservants?" (II. Kings 5:26). Gehazi went out of his presence a leper.

Shall men today who associate lavish living and extravagance with the power of God come off better than the poor deluded Gehazi?

Those who come in the spirit of Elijah, will be men who believe in the supernatural. The entire ministry of Elijah was characterized by the miraculous. He was fed supernaturally in the desert by ravens which God sent to take care of His prophet. At another time, it was by an angel. Yet again, he was preserved alive at the home of a widow who had supplies enough only for one last meal. The flour and the oil multiplied miraculously. Elijah, in his simple trust in God, fulfilled the words of Jesus Who centuries later was to tell men:

> ***"Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, of what ye shall drink; not yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment. Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?" (Matt. 6:25-26)***

Who knows what the days ahead hold? A terrible hour is coming on the earth. Men's hearts will be failing them for fear. The three and a half years of famine in Elijah's day may well be a type of the Great Tribulation. But one thing we can be assured of, God will take care of His own. Neither devil, beast, Antichrist, nor any creature, can overcome the faith of those that are Elijah saints.

There were times when Elijah apparently experienced supernatural transportation. Perhaps Elijah saints may have the same experience that Philip had when he met the Ethiopian in the desert. Such experiences were incidental to their ministry, rather than a part of it. Yet, God can and may permit men on occasions to have similar experiences today. Always, we must keep in mind that these things were never for spectacular demonstrations, nor show. The devil would have had Christ cast himself off the Temple to prove his divinity, a suggestion which Christ rejected. Ordinarily Philip, Christ and Elijah moved from place to place as other human beings, by the normal mode of travel.

A supernatural ministry primarily, is a ministry to bring deliverance to those that have need. Elijah brought life to the child that had died, and comforted a grieving mother that had lost her only son. His successor, Elisha, also healed the sick and raised the dead. Naaman, the Syrian, journeyed from a distant land to be healed of his leprosy, and he came not in vain. Elisha also healed a child that death had taken, bringing his spirit back from beyond the veil where ordinarily none ever returns.

The whole life of Elijah and Elisha was marked by the ministry of the supernatural. Sometimes this ministry brought judgment on the wicked. At other times those men led armies to victory by means of supernaturally given wisdom and knowledge. They called fire down out of heaven in judgment. They healed bitter waters and made them sweet in blessing. No circumstances arose against them over which they were not the masters. Even the elements were compelled to obey their will. The waters of the Jordan parted when they spoke the word. It was a ministry of the miraculous. Will that ministry appear again in these days? The best answer is that we are beginning to see it now!

This will be a ministry of boldness. Elijah and Elisha did not fear to stand before

kings. All men were the same in their sight. They did not seek to curry favor with the princes of this world. Rather, when kings saw the power that they had, they came to regard them with solemn respect. In every sense of the word they were leaders. They did not compromise nor conform to the follies of their time. They stood boldly against all unrighteousness. Those who rose up against them did so to their own regret. Too late, they found that such men were not to be trifled with. Elijah and Elisha had a work to do and they had no mind to allow anyone to cause them to deviate from that which God had told them to do.

This will be a ministry that will expose all that is false. Baal worship had become the national religion of Elijah's day. But the prophet refused to bow to Baal. He refused to compromise with the non-supernatural religion of the day. Singlehanded, he challenged the vested religious interests that had powerful allies in the king's court. Elijah, anointed of God and bold in faith, met the false prophets of his day in a mighty challenge of faith and overthrew the whole institution of evil. Men today, through the ministry of the supernatural, will challenge the false isms and cults of this our day, not by might nor power, but by the Sword of the Spirit.

We are living in a Christian dispensation. God's messengers will come in love, pleading with men to give up their sins and turn to the God of the Bible. But they will minister in judgment also, even as occurred in the early Church. Ananias and Sapphira sought to leaven the Church with their hypocrisy. Judgment came upon them even according to the words of Peter, spoken in the Spirit. Elymas, the sorcerer, sought to withstand Paul and lead away inquirers from the faith. But Paul speaking under the anointing of the Holy Spirit commanded blindness to come upon the man who would substitute sorcery for the Gospel.

Yea, verily if our nation is to be turned back to God, it will be through an Elijah ministry. Only through a ministry of the supernatural will the wicked and careless of our day be arrested in their course. We may thank God for all who preach Christ and salvation through His name, yet a message that leaves out a half or two-thirds of the Great Commission is not sufficient for our times. We are in a day of full revelation. God is about to demand that men preach the whole Gospel or none. Only a miraculous ministry will be able to stand against the forces of hell that are soon to be unleashed. Elijah in his day turned his nation back to the faith of his fathers. Today, there must be a ministry that will repeat that work. Only then shall God's servants deliver their souls in this, our generation.

What is the secret of the Elijah ministry? We should know by now. Elijah lived

for only one thing—to walk with God and to fulfill His will. The world and its activities held no interest for him. He lived in a spiritual realm where he could ever commune with God, a realm where all things were possible.

Elijah stood before Ahab, and told him that the heavens would give forth neither rain nor dew but by his word. But ere he stood before Ahab, he had stood before God. When Elijah was before the people at Carmel he lifted his voice in prayer saying:

> ***". . . Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word. Hear me, O Lord, hear me, that this people may know that thou art the Lord God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again." (I Kings 18:36-37)***

That was the petition he prayed when the fire fell, when the hearts of the people were turned back unto the God of Israel!

Again, Elijah prayed for rain. Seven times did he pray, and though the heavens were brass, he would not be discouraged, but knew the answer must come. What battles took place at that hour in the spiritual world, we can only surmise. In the end it was a terrible defeat for Satan. We may be certain that the devil had employed all the legions of the nether world to forestall defeat, though in vain. While at the home of the widow when death struck, Elijah never wavered. The two met face to face and death was the loser. Elijah was so near to God that it could be said that he lived in two worlds. Even his thoughts were on the unseen world. Less and less did he regard material things. Once he went forty days in the strength of the food of angels. More and more his life became identified with the life of God. God became such a part of him that he lived as God lived. He commanded as God commanded. At last he was living nearer heaven than he was to earth. It was not a strange thing then when one day a celestial chariot came a little closer than usual and took Elijah the rest of the way.

So shall the Elijah saints be caught away from this world. Today they live in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. The change will not be too great when heavenly chariots swing low and take them away to be with their Lord. And that is the way it is going to be. Paul tells us about it in 1 Cor. 15:51-52.

> ***"Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed."***

And again in 1 Thes. 4:15-17:

> ***"For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. 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."***

Shall we not say in the words of the great Apostle, "Even so come quickly Lord Jesus." He that shall come will come, and will not tarry. But there is a work to do first. Let us arise and do it. For when this Gospel is published in all the world, then shall the end come.

Chapter 22, The Seventh Trumpet

127. The Sounding Of The Seventh Trumpet

> ***"And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever. And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces and worshipped God. Saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned."***

Question: What occurs during the sounding of the Seventh Trumpet?

Answer: Christ answers this question in the tenth chapter. "But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God shall be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets." (Rev. 10:7) The mystery of God is the sum total of the revelation that God has given man, by His prophets concerning His plan for mankind. Many things therefore are to be fulfilled during the sounding of the Seventh Trumpet.

1. The Seventh Trumpet, it should be remembered, is the third and last Woe—a woe of judgment upon the inhabitants of the earth, as were also the other two woes mentioned by the angel in Rev. 8:13:

> ***. . ."Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabiters of the earth by reason of the voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound."***

What does this Seventh Trumpet Woe include? Obviously it includes the Vial judgments. The mystery of God fulfilled under the Seventh Trumpet with Vial judgments yet to come. Just as the opening of the Seventh Seal included the Seven Trumpet judgments,

so the sounding of the Seventh Trumpet includes the Vial judgments. This is the time of the final wrath of God, as is seen in verse 18, "And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come . . ." The Seventh Trumpet unfolds the Seven Vial Judgments of the wrath of God.

2. The Seventh Trumpet Woe includes the destruction of them that destroy the earth. "And the time . . . thou . . . shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth." (Verse 18) This means the destruction of the Beast and the False Prophet,

who are the ones who have been destroying the earth. “These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone.” (Rev. 19:20) Satan, while not immediately destroyed, is incarcerated in the Bottomless Pit, until the end of the thousand year reign, after which he is loosed for a little season, before being cast into the Lake of Fire. (Rev. 20:10)

3. The Seventh Trumpet inaugurates the reign of Christ. (Rev. 11:15-17) The Seventh Trumpet spans time and takes us into the world to come, when Christ and his saints shall “reign for ever and ever.” Indeed at the time of the sounding of the Seventh Trumpet, Christ has taken to Himself His “great power and hast reigned.” Nevertheless, till now, His reign has been disputed by the Beast and the False Prophet. But in the days of the sounding of the Seventh Trumpet, these wicked beings will be destroyed, and Christ’s sovereignty over the kingdoms of this world will no longer be challenged.

4. The Seventh Trumpet includes the giving of rewards to the prophets and the saints. “And that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great.” (Rev. 11:18) This certainly is the judgment seat of Christ spoken of by the Apostle Paul.

> ***“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.” (2 Cor. 5:10)***
>
> ***“Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; Every man’s work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man’s work of what sort it is. If any man’s work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man’s work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.” (1 Cor. 3:12-15)***

This is a judgment. Though not a judgment of condemnation, it is a solemn event. There will be many who have labored for Christ with wrong motives, and alas, their works will be found to be hay, wood, and stubble. These will be burned by the revealing fire of judgment, and their reward will be lost. These people are saved, “yet so as by fire”. (Verse 15) The labors of others, however, will be found to be “gold, silver, precious stones”; and they will receive a full reward.

5. The Seventh Trumpet marks “the time of the dead that shall be judged”. This

clearly shows that the Seventh Trumpet includes all events in the consummation of the mystery of God. The righteous dead have been resurrected before the Seventh Trumpet, so the reference is to the wicked dead.

Christ mentions the resurrection in John 5:28-29:

> ***"Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."***

The Book of Revelation, however, reveals that there is a time interval between the two resurrections as is shown in the 20th chapter.

> ***"But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years." (Rev. 20:5-6)***

The Seventh Trumpet then clearly extends to the consummation of the divine prophecies given to the human race, including the judgment of the dead which takes place at the Great White Throne judgment.

From these things, we see that the sounding of the Seventh Trumpet brings us chronologically to the end of "the mystery of God ... as he hath declared to his servants the prophets."

128. The Opening Of The Temple In Heaven

Question: What is meant in Revelation 11:19, where it speaks of the Temple of God being opened in heaven?

> ***"And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament; and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail." (Rev. 11:19)***

Answer: Two things are in view:

1. The opening of the temple is to permit the seven angels with the last Seven Plagues to come forth and pour their vials upon the earth. This is explained in Rev. 15:1, 5, 6:

"And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvellous, seven angels having the seven last plagues; for in them is filled up the wrath of God. And after that I looked, and, behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened: And the seven angels came out of the temple, having the seven plagues, clothed in pure and white linen, and having their breasts girded with golden girdles."

The pouring out of the plagues, or vials, is the last of God's wrath, and takes place under the sounding of the Seventh Trumpet.

2. The appearance of the "ark of his testament" speaks of the fact that although cataclysmic judgment is to come upon the earth, nevertheless God has not forgotten His covenant with Israel, as signified by the Ark of the Covenant.

The godly remnant out of Israel, will be protected and preserved through the apocalyptic judgments, even as Noah and his family were preserved and protected during the judgment of the Flood. And this, God performs by the sealing of the 144,000 out of all the tribes of Israel.

Table of Contents

Revelation Series 06, The Two Witnesses By Gordon Lindsay
Contents
Chapter 19, Who Are the Two Witnesses?
- 113. John The Baptist And Elijah
- 114. Who Is The Second Witness?
- 115. What Happened To Enoch The Other Man Who Was Translated?
- 116. The Two Witnesses—Zerubabbel And Joshua
- 117. Other Witnesses
- 118. The Two Men In White Who Were Witnesses

Chapter 20, The Ministry of the Two Witnesses
- 119. Why Clothed In Sackcloth?
- 120. Do The Two Witnesses Have Converts?
- 121. Zechariah And The Book Of Revelation
- 122. Are The Two Witnesses And The Antichrist Contemporary?
- 123. How Does The Antichrist Overcome The Witnesses?
- 124. Death And Resurrection Of The Two Witnesses
- 125. The Ascension Of The Witnesses

Chapter 21, The Elijah Saints
- 126. The Elijah Saints

Chapter 22, The Seventh Trumpet
- 127. The Sounding Of The Seventh Trumpet
- 128. The Opening Of The Temple In Heaven