

# The Two Witnesses of God

## Revelation 11:3-14

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## The Two Witnesses of God

### ► Questions:

1. Who are these witnesses?
2. What purpose do they serve?
3. Are they real people or symbolic of something else?

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## The Two Witnesses of God

### ► Answers:

#### ► Historical Figures

- Since the Beast seems to be an historical person (the Anti-Christ) it is reasonable to expect that the two witnesses are historical figures. 11:7; 13:1
- They are patterned after Moses and Elijah. Lk 1:17
- The olive trees point to historical figures. Zech 4

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## The Two Witnesses of God

- ▶ Symbolic Figures
  - ▶ The context makes it likely to be symbolic of the church witnessing for Christ
  - ▶ 1,260 days parallels verse 2
  - ▶ The entire world sees the defeat and resurrection of the witnesses - Rapture perhaps?
  - ▶ Similarities to Dan 7:21
  - ▶ Lampstands - the two churches of Revelation? Smyrna and Philadelphia.

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## Their Prophetic Ministry

### 11:3-6

1. They are given power by God to witness. See Acts 1:8. Notice also verse 7.
2. The word witness came to mean one whose life witnessed to the power of Jesus even unto death. "martusin" = Martyr.
  - a) Jesus is called the faithful witness - 1:5; 3:14

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## Their Prophetic Ministry

### 11:3-6

3. Prophecy - to tell others of the words of God to warn them unto repentance before Jesus comes again.
  - ▶ John the Baptist - Matt 3:2
  - ▶ Jesus - Matt 4:17
4. 1,260 days. Parallels verse 2 and indicates a fixed and certain time as associated with the Great Tribulation.

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## Their Prophetic Ministry

### 11:3-6

5. Sackcloth - mourning and repentance.
  - See Joel 1:8; Amos 8:10; Jonah 3:5-9
  - Both Jonah and Elijah wore sackcloth - 2 Kings 1:8; Mk 1:6
6. 2 Olive Trees and 2 Lampstands - Zech 4
  - Lampstands are symbolic of the church/temple
  - Olive trees are Joshua and Zerubbabel

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## Their Prophetic Ministry

### 11:3-6

6. 2 Olive Trees and 2 Lampstands - Zech 4
  - Joshua is the high priest
  - Zerubbabel is the governor in the line of Judah
  - Zechariah would build the temple and the opposition against him would be leveled before him by God. See Zech 5 and 6
  - These themes are brought together by these two witnesses in Revelation

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## Their Prophetic Ministry

### 11:3-6

7. God's protection of the witnesses
  - Fire come from their mouths.
    - Reminiscent of Elijah calling down fire - 2 Kings 1:9-14
  - Power to shut up the skies
    - Elijah and the 3 ½ years of drought - 1 Kings 17 & 18

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## Their Prophetic Ministry

### 11:3-6

7. God's protection of the witnesses
  - power to turn water into blood
    - Moses - see Ex 7:20-21
  - Strike the earth with any plague they like
    - Lots to choose from - Exodus to Revelation.

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## Their Death 11:7-10

1. After 3 ½ years they finish their testimony - see 6:9-11.
  - They are witnesses unto death - martyrs
2. The beast from the abyss kills them
  - This is a demonic figure and very likely the anti-Christ. See Dan 7
  - Also Rev 13:7

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## Their Death 11:7-10

3. Their bodies are left unburied
  - This was a great insult in middle eastern culture. See Gen 40:19; 1 Sam 17:43-47; 2 Kings 9:10
4. Jerusalem is referred to as Sodom and Egypt! Terms usually used for Babylon and Rome.

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## Their Death 11:7-10

4. Sodom and Egypt
  - Jerusalem/Israel was sometimes referred to as Sodom and Gomorrah in the O.T.
  - Isa 1:9-20; Jer 23:14; Ez 16:46-49
  - Clearly the city is no longer following God. The great apostasy has occurred. See Matt 24:10-12; 2 Thess 2:1-4

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## Their Death 11:7-10

5. The people of the earth will look upon their dead bodies and will rejoice and celebrate.
  - They will send gifts to each other - Anti-Christmas?
  - Celebration of the death of the gospel/church/God
  - Note the contrast in 12:10-12

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## Their Death 11:7-10

6. 3 ½ days - a short time to reflect the 3 ½ years of the witnesses. It is again a determined time set and controlled by God

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## Their Resurrection 11:11-12

1. Resurrected after 3 ½ days by God.
  - An allusion to the valley of dry bones in Ezek chapter 37
  - See also Gen 2:7 - the breath of life.
  - Could this be symbolic of the rapture of the church?

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## Their Resurrection 11:11-12

2. Terror struck the people of the earth
  - “mega phobos” - huge fear, mega fear
  - Fear and terror of the power of God
3. A voice calls them up to heaven
4. Ascend to heaven in a cloud.
  - This is the way Jesus ascended. See Acts 1:8-11
  - Also Rev 1:7; Mt 24:30; 1 Thess 4:17

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## Judgement and Repentance- 11:13

1. A great earthquake destroys 1/10 of the city of Jerusalem
  - A “siesmos megas” - a mega earthquake
  - See also Rev 16:19
  - See parallels to Ezek 38:19-20; Zech 14:4
2. 7,000 people are killed - 1/10 of 70,000 which was the size of Jerusalem at the time of writing

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## Judgement and Repentance- 11:13

3. A portion of the people remaining on earth repent - the give "glory to God"
  - See 14:6; 15:4; 16:9; 19:7
  - Also Josh 7:19; 1 Sam 6:5; Isa 42:12; Jer 13:6
4. This is likely a sign of true repentance though it could be other
  - And this with the church raptured!

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## Conclusion/Summary

The Two Witnesses are both real, historic people but also represent and are symbolic of the church as a whole.

The church will come under great persecution but God will protect them for a time.

After that time, God will rapture the church up to heaven and the last 3 ½ years of the tribulation begin

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