

Revelation Pastor Lou DeVizia

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Introduction: This section of Chapter 11, along with all of Chapter 10, represents a pause, and explanatory interlude if you will, in the middle of the angels sounding the seven trumpets. Here what we see, chiefly, is the ministry of the "two witnesses." We have already seen that there will be great world evangelization happening which will lead to many conversions and martyrdoms (though this will pale in comparative scope to the amount of hard-heartedness and scoffing that occurs - that is no different than now). Here we see a very unique ministry of two people raised up to prophesy. The ministry of these "two witnesses" seems to take place in Jerusalem (primarily at least) and, though at first resulting in rejection and persecution, possibly begins to bring the first large-scale repentance and turning to God of the people of Israel in preparation for the return of the Messiah.

Many different theories and speculations have been put forth concerning the identity of the "two witnesses." Some consider them to be literally two people, others take them as representative of something else. This study will emphasize the former - it is best to take the Scripture as plainly as possible unless blatantly obvious that symbolism is being employed (and that is not the case here). But if it were important to identify them at present with absolute clarity, it would be presented with absolute clarity. It is enough to identify them with the information given.

1. Verses 1-2 - The measuring of the temple, the altar, and the counting of those in the temple.

- vv.1-2 - The idea is that the Lord will not forget those who are His elect even when the **temple** and Jerusalem fall into the hands of the antichrist and the **holy city** is trampled **underfoot** for the last half of the 70th Week of Daniel. God has His elect among the children of Israel just as He has His elect from among every nation on the earth. When the temple falls into the hands of the antichrist, God will still remember those who are His.

NOTE: A general, overall picture of chronology can be seen. The presence of the temple in Jerusalem indicates that a temple will be rebuilt, possibly in conjunction with the false peace of the first seal. That ministry will last for the first half of the 7-year Tribulation (42 months), and then when the Abomination of Desolation (Daniel 9, Matthew 24) is put in the temple, there begins the second half of the Tribulation, the **forty-two months** mentioned here.

2. Verses 3-13 - The two witnesses.

- v.3 - The **two witnesses**: some say they are Elijah and Moses, others Elijah and Enoch, others Elijah and John the Baptist (Elijah is a popular candidate), others say they are not actual people, etc. They certainly seem to be actual people. But their identity is not given. Their ministry of 1,260 days (or 42 months, or 3-1/2 years) seems to correspond to the 42

months of the previous verse (see Luke 21:24 for further elaboration). Their ministry is to **prophesy... clothed in sackloth**.

- v.4 - This seems to correspond to Zechariah 4. That is, significantly, they are uniquely empowered by the Holy Spirit.

- vv.5-6 - One of the reasons people propose Moses and Elijah is because of the similarity of the authority they were given.

- v.7 - The **beast that ascends out of the bottomless pit** is only allowed to kill the witnesses when their work is complete. God is still in control.

- v.8 - A clear reference to Jerusalem, it is **spiritually... called Sodom and Egypt** because of the sin, idolatry and evil that is rampant at this time.

- vv.9-10 - Their prophesying greatly angered the God-hating population of the earth. And so they celebrated their deaths and even left their bodies in the streets so all could see them.

- vv.11-12 - In the plain sight of their enemies, God caused them to resurrect and then brought them to heaven in a cloud.

- v.13 - At that exact time, the second woe strikes - a great earthquake, which kills one-tenth of Jerusalem (and perhaps similar numbers worldwide).