

sermon study summary

Revelation Part 16 – Two Witnesses, the Beast and Victory in Jesus

Dr. Henry Schorr

April 20 / 21, 2024

In most of the Bible, it's easy to spot the distinction between what is to be taken literally and what is meant to be taken figuratively. The two dominant views interpret Revelation differently but agree on the general principles that we need to apply to our lives.

In Revelation 11:1, John **“was given a reed like a measuring rod and was told ‘Go and measure the temple of God and the altar, with its worshipers.’”**

Many believe John was told to measure a literal temple that is yet to be built (Jeremiah 33:14). This passage may be referring to a literal temple being built in Jerusalem during the 7-year tribulation period.

Truth #1: GOD WILL PROTECT THOSE WHO LOVE HIM.

Apostle Paul at times referred to all those who believe in Jesus as God's temple (1 Corinthians 3:16). This means God was asking John to measure the number of His people, Jewish people or a combination of Jews and Gentiles who have come to faith in Christ. He's going to protect them even during the 42 months of the Great Tribulation. Nothing can separate God's people from His love!

Verse 3 tells about the 2 witnesses, “the two olive trees and the two lampstands”, who will preach the gospel for 1260 days (or 3 ½ years). Some commentators believe them to be Moses and Elijah returning to earth. Verses 5 and 6 say that these two witnesses have been given incredible power by God Himself to preach and impact millions.

Zechariah chapter 4 tells us about two lampstands fueled by oil from two olive trees on either side. In verse 6, God reminds Zechariah **“Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit” says the Lord Almighty.** The Holy Spirit at work in us is what empowers every Christian today to introduce others to Jesus.

Truth #2: GOD'S GRACE EXTENDS TO EVERYONE.

Verse 7 says that the beast/the Anti-Christ will attack the two witnesses but not until they have finished the work God has called them to. The beast can do nothing outside of God's permission.

Truth #3: GOD WILL MAKE A WAY TO COMPLETE THE ASSIGNMENT HE GIVES US.

The primary reason we are still here, and not in Heaven, is to join Him in seeking and saving the lost. Not just to study and learn the Bible, listen to sermons, or worship and draw closer to Him.

Truth #4: GOD CAN USE OUR GREATEST DEFEATS TO ACCOMPLISH HIS GREATEST VICTORIES

Verse 11 says that after 3 ½ days, the two witnesses are miraculously resurrected by God and are called home to be with God. God uses their death and resurrection to draw many people to Himself and to give glory to God.

Truth #5: GOD IN CHRIST HAS MADE A WAY FOR US TO HAVE ACCESS TO HIM AND TO HEAVEN.

In verse 19, John was allowed to see the Holy of Holies, the most sacred place in the temple where God truly dwelt. No one used to be allowed in the Holy of Holies except the high priest, and a veil separated the Holy of Holies from the people because of our sin.

But Jesus died, took our place of punishment and the veil was torn. He, who had no sin became sin for us and took upon Himself our sins and paid for them. When we place our faith in Him, we are made holy and righteous in God's sight because by faith in Christ, we are now in Him and God's wrath and justice are satisfied.

Because of what Christ accomplished on the cross and through His resurrection we now have free access to God. A time is coming when we will get to Heaven and then we will see the Lord face to face!

sermon study guide

IN – PURSUE RELATIONSHIP

1. What project do you most want to complete in the near future?
2. How does figurative language help express ideas?

UP – PURSUE GOD

3. Read Revelation 11:1-2, Romans 11:25, and 1 Corinthians 3:16. What was John to measure? Why? What does it mean?
4. Read Revelation 11:3-13 and Zechariah 4:12-14. Who are the two witnesses? What is their ministry? What is the effect of their prophecies? Why were they symbolically referred to as olive trees and lampstands?

OUT – PURSUE MISSION

5. In Revelation 11:3-13, the two witnesses preached to the lost. Where did they get their power? How can their examples motivate us? What can you and the group do?
6. Oswald Chambers said, “The remarkable thing about fearing God is that when you fear God, you fear no one or anything else.” Spend time encouraging each other to fear God so as not to fear the world and what Satan could do to us.

For Personal Reflection / Prayer:

Do you know what mission/purpose God has for your life? If you do know, what progress are you making? If you don't know, in what way(s) is the Lord challenging you to live a more faithful and purposeful life?

Share with someone what God has revealed to you.

THE WORD (NIV)

Romans 11:1-13 I was given a reed like a measuring rod and was told, “Go and measure the temple of God and the altar, with its worshippers.”² But exclude the outer court; do not measure it, because it has been given to the Gentiles. They will trample on the holy city for 42 months.³ And I will appoint my two witnesses, and they will prophesy for 1,260 days, clothed in sackcloth.”⁴ They are “the two olive trees” and the two lampstands, and “they stand before the Lord of the earth.”⁵ If anyone tries to harm them, fire comes from their mouths and devours their enemies. This is how anyone who wants to harm them must die.⁶ They have power to shut up the heavens so that it will not rain during the time they are prophesying; and they have power to turn the waters into blood and to strike the earth with every kind of plague as often as they want.

⁷ Now when they have finished their testimony, the beast that comes up from the Abyss will attack them, and overpower and kill them.⁸ Their bodies will lie in the public square of the great city—which is figuratively called Sodom and Egypt—where also their Lord was crucified.⁹ For three and a half days some from every people, tribe, language and nation will gaze on their bodies and refuse them burial.¹⁰ The inhabitants of the earth will gloat over them and will celebrate by sending each other gifts, because these two prophets had tormented those who live on the earth.

¹¹ But after the three and a half days the breath of life from God entered them, and they stood on their feet, and terror struck those who saw them.¹² Then they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, “Come up here.” And they went up to heaven in a cloud, while their enemies looked on.

¹³ At that very hour there was a severe earthquake and a tenth of the city collapsed. Seven thousand people were killed in the earthquake, and the survivors were terrified and gave glory to the God of heaven.

Romans 11:25 I do not want you to be ignorant of this mystery, brothers and sisters, so that you may not be conceited: Israel has experienced a hardening in part until the full number of the Gentiles has come in,

1 Corinthians 3:16 Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in your midst?

Zechariah 4:12-14¹² Again I asked him, “What are these two olive branches beside the two gold pipes that pour out golden oil?”

¹³ He replied, “Do you not know what these are?”
“No, my lord,” I said.

¹⁴ So he said, “These are the two who are anointed to[a] serve the Lord of all the earth.”

This week's writers: Jorel Quemuel, Sandi Somers, Elsa Henderson, and Mark Eckstein