"GOD'S MESSENGERS OF DOOM"
Revelation 11

7-3-2022



**** We need a greater appreciation for those who faithfully proclaim God's Word**.

I. GOD ALWAYS HAS A <u>MESSENGER</u> ("<u>Witness</u>") (v. 1-4)

II. GOD <u>AUTHENTICATES</u> HIS MESSENGERS (v. 5-6)

III. GOD <u>PRESERVES</u> HIS MESSENGERS UNTIL THEIR WORK IS FINISHED (v. 7-10)

IV. GOD <u>REWARDS</u> HIS MESSENGERS (v. 11-19)

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As John approached the end Trumpet Judgements and before the Bowl Judgments, he fills in some details evidently showing why God is right to destroy the world for it's evil.
Revelation 10 – 15 are largely parenthetical giving us a lot of background information showing why the Lord is justified in judging the world the way He does.

Chapter 10 – A sweet/bitter scroll is eaten (God's Message of Doom)

Chapter 11 – Two witnesses prophesy (God's Messengers of Doom)

**** We need a greater appreciation for those who faithfully proclaim God's Word**.

I. GOD ALWAYS HAS A <u>MESSENGER</u> ("<u>Witness</u>") (v. 1-4)

Before God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, He sent two angelic witnesses to inform Abraham of His intentions.

Before God sent the plagues upon Egypt He sent Moses and Aaron who said "let my people go!"

Before God introduced His Messiah (Jesus) He sent John the Baptist to pave the way for the Messiah's arrival.

Before the Messiah returns for His second coming, it is my belief that He will likewise send two witnesses to encourage God's saints and to give warning of the wrath of God to be poured out on planet earth.

See verse 3. Why 2 witnesses? Two are better than one. They support each other. Jesus sent out his disciples 2x2. More importantly, "in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word shall be established" (Deut. 17:6; 19:15; Mt. 18:16; 2 Cor.13:1; 1 Tim.5:19; Heb. 10:28).

Acts 14:17 "… Nevertheless he left not himself without witness…"

11:1-2
Apparently when the Antichrist makes a peace treaty (covenant) with Israel at the beginning of the 70th. "week" of years (Dan. 9:27), he will allow the Jews to rebuild their Temple, but will allow the outside court to remain the property of Islam & the Arabs.

The measuring rod that the apostle John is using is probably not to measure to find out the temples dimensions (the dimensions are not given), but to measure it for judgment.

11:2b
Midway through the final 7 years, the Antichrist breaks the peace treaty, sets himself up to be worshipped (II Th.2:4), desecrates the Temple (Dan. 9:27; Mt. 24:15), persecutes Israel (Mt. 24:16; Rev. 12:6). At this time, paganism will trample the holy city (Jerusalem [Is. 52:1] - which will be turned into a "Sodom and Egypt" - 11:8).

"42 months" = the last 3 1-2 years of the Tribulation.

11:3
Who are God's two end-time witnesses?

Views:

1) John the Apostle + ? (Rev. 10:11; Jn. 21:22-23)

2) Joshua the High Priest and Zerubbabel (Zech. 4:1-14) (or someone like them)

3) Moses & Elijah (on Mt. of Transfiguration)

4) Enoch & Elijah (who both never died) (Mal. 4:5)

***Note: Elijah is prophesied to return before the Day of the Lord (Mal.4:5); Elijah predicted a drought of 3 ½ years during the years of wicked king Ahab and his evil wife, Jezebel.

Do these two witnesses minister during the first half or second half of the Tribulation?

****Proofs for first half:*

1) Their being slain is linked with the Antichrist's resurrection, which occurs at mid-Trib. (11:7)

2) The reference to "months" (11:2), in contrast to "day" (11:3) seems to imply a different time period.

3) These two witnesses ("olive trees") will function like Joshua the High Priest and Zerubbabel, who witnessed the second O.T. Temple being built (compare Rev. 11:4 with Zech. 4). The temple will evidently be rebuilt during the first half of the Tribulation.

4) It is utterly unthinkable that people will be sending each other gifts (11:10) at the end of the Tribulation. (At the end of the 70th. Week the Bowl Judgments are being poured out, Christ descends to the Earth, and the Antichrist is destroyed)

Proofs for <u>second</u> half:

1) This account falls in between the sixth and seventh trumpet judgments, which occur in the second half. (Note however, Chapter 11 is a parenthetical, nullifying chronological sequence).

2) All other references to time (3 1-2 years) are references to the second half of the Trib. -the Time of Jacob's Trouble (cp. 11:2, 3; 12:6, 14; 13:5).

3) Even though the Antichrist (who kills them) rises from the dead mid-way though the Trib., Rev. 11:7 does not necessarily teach that as the time period he kills them.

4) Dan. 12:11 teaches an additional 30 days extending past the 7 years, which would account for their 3 1/2 days living in the streets. (However, it is impossible that Christ would allow this, if He returns immediately after the 70th. Week is complete)

11:3

"prophesy" – to foretell and to forthtell what God is about to do.

"1260 days" **=** 3 1-2 years according to Jewish reckoning of 360 days to a year.

"Sackcloth" – Clothing used for sacks; a rough, burlap bag type; usually dark in color; (the opposite of smooth and shiny); clothes worn as a sign of <u>mourning</u> (<u>sorrow</u>; pain; anquish of soul) (cp. Gen. 38:34).

11:4
"Two olive trees, and two candlesticks" (lampstands): Olive trees supply oil for the lampstands which shines out the light in the midst of darkness. Who is represented by these?
SEE: Zech. 4:9-14. Just as Joshua and Zerubbabel witnessed the Spirit of God's power in seeing the completion of the Temple, in the last days two mighty witnesses will yet arise when the Temple is rebuilt and will prophesy of coming doom & destruction (hence the "sackcloth") (Rev. 11:1, 4).

They also may be used by God to spark a revival among God's people living during this time! The "oil" of God's Spirit will be poured out of their lives and be a source of blessing and encouragement to the faith of others!

II. GOD AUTHENTICATES HIS MESSENGERS (v. 5-6)

God always authenticated His messengers during times in which He was pouring out new revelation. (the signs of Moses; Elijah; the Apostles)
Mark 16:17 – 20
And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues;
18 They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.
19 So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God.
20 And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with *them*, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen.

Paul said regarding himself: Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds. 2 Cor. 12:12

He will authenticate His two witnesses again in the future.

11:5
"Fire proceedeth out of their mouth" – Is this literal fire? Or the fire like power of their words (God's Word)?
Jer 20:9 Then I said, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name. But his word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay.
Jer 23:29 Is not my word like as a fire? saith the LORD; and like a hammer [that] breaketh the rock in pieces?

It seems literal. The two witnesses will have unusual power! One exhale, and it's all over! (cp. Elijah calling down fire from heaven in O.T. - II Ki. 1:10-12).

"If any man will hurt them" - *"will"* = desire. "If anyone merely has the desire to injure the witnesses (or merely harbors the evil though of such) . . . will be destroyed" (Smith, p. 169).

11:6
Powers over rainfall (I Ki. 17:1; Ja. 5:17) and power to turn water into blood (Exodus 7:20, 21) are reminders of the powers of Elijah and Moses (NOTE: These powers will last for 3 1-2 years during the ***"days of their prophecy"*** - Elijah stopped the rain for exactly 3 1-2 years (Ja. 5:17).

III. GOD <u>PRESERVES</u> HIS MESSENGERS UNTIL THEIR WORK IS FINISHED (v. 7-10)

11:7

"These witnesses are (seemingly) immortal till their work is done" (Seiss).
Nothing can stop God's men until God is finished with their service.

"The beast" = the resurrected Antichrist (Rev. 13:7).

11:8

"The great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt" = <u>Jerusalem</u>, which will be polluted by the Antichrist.
(NOTE: When God wants something to have a spiritual [figurative] meaning, He will indicate so, as He does here.)

11:9

How could people from all around the world view these two dead witnesses? TV - via satellite. Something unheard of 100 years ago.

> God said in the O.T. Law that a dead body was not to remain out in the open beyond nightfall, because doing such would defile the land (Deut. 21:22-23; cp. Jn. 19:31).

11:10

The godless world will celebrate because now they can return to sinning in peace without some preachers telling them how to live!

Just as the goodness of God caused the Jews to send gifts to each other in Neh. 8:10 and Esther 9:19, the seeming victory of Satan will cause the world to celebrate by exchanging gifts.
Warren Wiersbe refers to this gift exchange as a "Satanic Christmas"

“Happy dead saints day!” the wicked world will say

IV. GOD <u>REWARDS</u> HIS MESSENGERS (v. 11-19)

11:11
Can you imagine the shock TV viewers are in for when God's servants arise!?

11:12
NOTE: the similarity with the Rapture -

"a great voice" -	"shout"	(I Th. 4:16)
"come up hither" -	"shall rise"	(I Th. 4:16; cp. Rev.4:1)
"cloud" -	"caught up in the clouds"	(I Th.4:17)

The summons of these 2 witnesses to Heaven is <u>not</u> a cryptic reference to the Rapture, however. But it is an event which will foreshadow that great event.

11:13
"Tenth part of the city" = What city? The city previously mentioned - <u>Jerusalem</u> (v. 8)

11:14
Verse 14 concludes the parenthetical interjection which God placed in between the 6th. and the 7th. Trumpet judgement. Now, God goes back to the chronology of the Trumpet Judgements to occur in the Day of the Lord.

11:15
"Seventh angel sounded"
Chronologically, this 7th. Trumpet will occur at the next to the last day of the 70th. week. At the 1,259th. day of the second half of the 70th. Week. It is believed by this professor that all of the Bowl Judgements (Rev.16) will occur on day 1,260 -- the last day of the 70th. Week.

"The seventh trumpet introduces and includes the seven bowl judgments of the wrath of God revealed in chapter 16." (John Walvoord)

11:15-17
When the seventh Trumpet sounds, Jesus Christ will descend to the Earth for the Battle of Armageddon (Zech.14:3,4) and will destroy His enemies and will establish His promised, long awaited Messianic reign on this earth.

"The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord" - This Earth will be taken over by the Father and His Only Begotten Son.

11:18
Why are the nations ***"angry"***? (cp. Ps. 2:1-3)

1) They want their own way but will not get it
2) Their sin is coming to an end
3) Their own attempts to build a "utopia" failed

(contrast the change from "rejoicing and merry making" (v. 10) to dread and anger)

"thy wrath is come" - The deep seated anger (orge) of God which has been stored up is now being poured out in all its fullness.

"the time of the dead" - The righteous, who were dead, but raised at the rapture, will now be given their rewards based on their faithfulness while they lived. The unrighteous unsaved sinners will not be raised until the 1,000 year millennial reign is over (Rev.20:5).

"Judged...reward" - This is the anticipated judgement of the "Sheep and the Goats" described in Matthew 25.

11:19
"The Temple of God" - The true, eternal temple in Heaven, which will never see defilement in contrast to the Tribulation Temple which will be defiled and trampled upon by wicked gentiles for 42 months!

Conclusion: God's wrath was poured out upon His Son so that it would not be poured out upon you and me.