

# The Two Witnesses of Revelation 11

## Introduction

*And I shall give unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy one thousand two hundred and sixty days, clad in sackcloth. These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands that are standing before the Elohim of the earth. And if anyone wishes to harm them, fire comes out from their mouth and consumes their enemies. And if anyone wishes to harm them, he has to be killed in that way. These possess authority to shut the heaven, so that no rain falls in the days of their prophecy. And they possess authority over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they wish. And when they have ended their witness, the beast coming up out of the pit of the deep shall fight against them, and overcome them, and kill them, and their dead bodies lie in the street of the great city which spiritually is called Sodom and Mitsrayim, where also our Master was impaled, and some of the peoples and tribes and tongues and nations see their dead bodies for three and a half days, and not allow their dead bodies to be placed into tombs, and those dwelling on the earth rejoice over them and exult. And they shall send gifts to each other, because these two prophets tortured those dwelling on the earth. And after the three and a half days a spirit of life from Elohim entered into them, and they stood upon their feet, and great fear fell on those who saw them. And they heard a loud voice from the heaven saying to them, "Come up here." And they went up into the heaven in a cloud, and their enemies saw them. And in that hour there came to be a great earthquake, and a tenth of the city fell. And in the earthquake seven thousand men were killed, and the rest became afraid and gave esteem to the Elohim of the heaven. (Rev.11:3-13).*

We are told that YHWH will pour out His spirit in the end days and the end days are here so we should be learning everything there is to know about these two witnesses, particularly their purpose and identity.

Many have pondered on the identity of these two witnesses but before we consider this issue it maybe more pertinent to ask what is their purpose and why are they called witnesses, why not apostles or messengers? What is it there their testimony?

## The Reason for Two Witnesses

From the account in Revelation it is clear that these two men have been sent to witness against a world that has utterly rejected YHWH, a world that has fallen completely from grace and totally under HaSatan's spell but most significantly a world without any fear whatsoever of YHWH. Today we are living out Prov. 16:25 *'There is a way that seems right to a man, But its end is the way of death.'* It is a society that believes it can do whatever it pleases, living by the maxim 'if it feels good do it.' It has to be the most godless generation since Noach, a generation that has no fear of retribution for its ungodliness. But retribution is coming, however Torah requires that there be at least two witnesses to establish the truth in any matter especially were conviction requires the death penalty (Deut.17:6, 19:15): hence YHWH's two witnesses to justify the end time annihilation of humanity.

It is interesting to note the close parallels between what eventuated during Moshe's confrontation with Pharaoh and the end time situation surrounding these two witnesses and this could help in identifying who they are.

Egypt was to be the backdrop for one of the greatest stand-offs described in the Scriptures and its ultimate consummation – death, also necessitated the presence of two witnesses; Moshe and Aharon. We are all familiar how YHWH, using Moshe and Aharon, brought upon Egypt several plagues: water turned to blood, frogs, biting insects, boils and sores, huge hailstones, locusts, a great and tangible darkness and finally only those to escape death of their first born were the families who put their trust in the blood of the lamb. These were the plagues poured out on a rebellious Egypt and we read in Revelation chapters eight and nine how the last generation will suffer very similar plagues; water turning to blood, demons coming out of the abyss like swarms of locusts, loathsome sores on those who have rejected YHWH and received the mark of the beast, great hailstones falling from heaven and a great darkness that covers the whole of the earth with the sun being darkened. The difference is that this time it is not just one nation or kingdom that is affected but the whole of humanity.

Egypt was a type of the end times when again we see the law giver and the prophet, who the people will treat in much the same way as Pharaoh treated Moshe and Aharon. Once again YHWH's two witnesses will face off against His enemy but this time it is not a Pharaoh it is a false messiah. Just as Moshe and Aharon stood against Pharaoh, so will these two witnesses stand against HaSatan and his satanic world order. This final rebellious empire will be just as stiff-necked as was Pharaoh but Pharaoh had to concede to YHWH's power and glory,

*Then the magicians said to Pharaoh, This is the finger of Elohim: and Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he did not listen to them; as YHWH had said. (Exod.8:19)*

*And Pharaoh's servants said to him, How long shall this man be a snare to us? let the men go, that they may serve YHWH their Elohim: do you not yet know that Egypt is destroyed? (Exod.10:7)*

Just as the Egyptians were greatly relieved to see the back of Moshe and Aharon and an end of their torment and suffering, so will it be in the end times with the world united in celebrating the death of the two witnesses, it will be a unification fermented in rebellion against YHWH,

*And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascended out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them. And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Mitsrayim, where also our Master was crucified. And they of the people and tribes and tongues and nations shall see their dead bodies three days and an half, and shall not allow their dead bodies to be put in graves. And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented those that dwelt on the earth. (Rev.11:7-10)*

Just as Pharaoh's magicians eventually accepted YHWH's authority, so will it be with the last generation with a repenting few showing obeisance to YHWH Eloheinu,

*And after the three and a half days a spirit of life from Elohim entered into them, and they stood upon their feet, and great fear fell on those who saw them. And they heard a loud voice from the heaven saying to them, "Come up here." And they went up into the heaven in a cloud, and their enemies saw them. And in that hour there came to be a great earthquake, and a tenth of the city fell. And in the earthquake seven thousand men were killed, and the rest became afraid and gave esteem to the Elohim of the heaven. (Rev.11:11-13)*

The two witnesses are called back to heaven to present their testimony of a totally corrupt earth providing the necessary justification for YHWH's decision to once again start afresh with a complete renewal. Enoch tells us that it will be a changed, not a new earth. In the separate article 'Tribulation, Wrath and After' it is explained how, via His wrath, YHWH will take creation back to the beginning thus all that man has created will disappear. According to Scripture the righteous who survive will have rejuvenated bodies with no memory of this life.

## **The Identity of the Two Witnesses**

In addition to Mashiach the Jewish people are expecting the appearance of two prophets and are convinced that the prophet Elijah will return before Mashiach,

*YHWH your Elohim shall raise up for you a Prophet like me from your midst, from your brothers. Listen to Him. (Deut.18:15)*

*Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of YHWH: (Mal.4:5).*

The identity of these two has been the subject of much discourse with; Moses, Elijah, John the Baptist, the two houses of Israel all claiming the role. From an examination of what Scripture tells us we can confidently exclude

the latter claim. Also we can easily eliminate John the Baptist because when the Pharisees enquired of him if he was Elijah he answered no he was not and neither was he the expected prophet (John 1:21). His only claim was to be the 'voice in the wilderness' prophesied by Isaiah (Isa. 40:3), even though Mashiach said John had come in the spirit of Elijah. However, when it comes to Moshe and Elijah both had similar powers to those displayed by the two witnesses and described in Revelation,

<b>Moshe</b>	<b>Elijah</b>
Turned water into blood Exod.7:19	Called down fire from heaven 1Kings 18:37
Invoked plagues Exod.8:12	Shut the heavens. 1Kings 17:1

Insofar as these two are concerned there are other similarities we can see; neither was allowed to complete their ministry both were taken early and both met with YHWH atop the same mountain which required each of them to complete a fast of forty days and nights (Exod.34:28, 1Kings 19:1-8). There is only one other who we are told fasted for this length; Mashiach. It is also interesting that it was these three that met together during the transfiguration. However we know Moshe died and because of what is said in Heb.9:27: 'all men must die once then comes judgement,' the argument is that the dead are only resurrected for judgement and for no other reason. Then there is the verse in Jude,

*But Michael the chief messenger, in contending with the devil, when he disputed about the body of Moshe, presumed not to bring against him a blasphemous accusation, but said, "YHWH rebuke you!" (Jude 1:9)*

Thus Moshe is rejected as being one of the witnesses. But such argument actually ignores Scripture which shows that a person can come back from the dead if YHWH wishes it: the widow's son (1Kings 17:18-22), Jairus' daughter (Luke 8:49-56), Lazarus in John chapter 11 and the righteous who were resurrected at the time of Mashiach's death (Luke 27:50-53) are examples. We may enquire why is Michael contending with HaSatan over the body of Moshe? Was it because the Archangel knew Moshe had more to do on earth? Hebrews should not be considered in such absolute terms as meaning no one can be resurrected this is not the context of the verse, thus we cannot disqualify Moshe on the content of the passage in Hebrews.

Now let us look at what is referred to as the transfiguration on the mount,

*And after six days Yahusha took Peter, James, and John his brother, and brought them up into a high mountain apart, And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light. And, behold, there appeared unto them Moshe and Elijah talking with him. Then answered Peter, and said to Yahusha, Master, it is good for us to be here: if you wish, let us make here three tabernacles; one for you, and one for Moshe, and one for Elijah. While he spoke, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; listen to him". And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid. And Yahusha came and touched them, and said, "Arise, and be not afraid." And when they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no man, save Yahusha only. And as they came down from the mountain, Yahusha charged them, saying, "Tell the vision to no man, until the Son of man be risen again from the dead." (Matt.17:1-9).*

Six days earlier Mashiach said,

*Truly, I say to you, there are some standing here who shall not taste death at all until they see the Son of Adam coming in His Kingdom. (Matt.16:28).*

Could it be that Mashiach was announcing the scene that a selected few of His disciples were about to experience at the transfiguration? Indeed we are told that the three, Mashiach, Moshe and Elijah were gleaming and in a glorified state. This gives credence to the belief that during this brief encounter the disciples were given a glimpse of Mashiach's future glory in His millennial kingdom. Were they given a glimpse of a reality that is hidden from our eyes to encourage us to live by faith?

*Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. For by it the elders obtained a good report. (Heb.11:1-2).*

So it was likely not just a peep into some future glory but rather a glimpse of the heavenly reality, a reality that one day those of faith in Mashiah will enjoy as an actual reality in the kingdom of YHWH. Put another way the heavenly dimension was opened up for them to experience so that we, being told of it, might also believe: hence YHWH's comment to the three disciples,

*While he spoke, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; listen to him. And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid. (Matt.17:5-6)*

But surely such a meeting was not just for the benefit of a few disciples, could it be that there was a far greater purpose for this meeting, Luke provides a clue,

*And behold, two men were talking with him, Moshe and Elijah, who appeared in glory and spoke of his departure, which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. (Luke 9:30-31)*

The words spoken by YHWH in the cloud *"This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; listen to him"* tell us that this event also had a current element and was not just a vision of a future millennial glory. In fact it was also a staff meeting to discuss Yahusha's imminent demise, resurrection and ascension but why would these prophets be called to a meeting to discuss a matter they have little to do with? Or did they indeed have roles to play in what was about to transpire in Yerushalayim? Let us consider another passage from Luke,

*And on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they came to the tomb, bringing the spices which they had prepared, and they found the stone rolled away from the tomb. And having entered, they did not find the body of the Master Yahusha. And it came to be, as they were perplexed about this, that see, two men stood by them in glittering garments. And becoming frightened and bowing their faces to the earth, these said to them, "Why do you seek the living among the dead? He is not here, but has been raised up!" (Luke 24:1-6)*

*But Miryam was standing outside by the tomb weeping. Then as she wept, she stooped down to the tomb, and saw two messengers in white sitting, one at the head and the other at the feet, where the body of Yahusha HaMashiah had been laid. (John 20:11-12)*

Two men in dazzling apparel standing at the tomb during His resurrection from the dead. The description of these two shows a striking resemblance to the two who met with Mashiah at the transfiguration. In both cases these men are described as being in a glorified state. Then we are told of a similar appearance in Acts,

*So when they had come together, they asked Him, saying, "Master, would You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel". And He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority. But you shall receive power when the Set-apart Spirit has come upon you, and you shall be My witnesses in Yerushalayim, and in all Yehudah and Shomeron, and to the end of the earth." And having said this, while they were looking on, He was taken up, and a cloud hid Him from their sight. And as they were gazing into the heaven as He went up, see, two men stood by them dressed in white, who also said, "Men of Galil, why do you stand looking up into the heaven? This same Yahusha, who was taken up from you into the heaven, shall come in the same way as you saw Him go into the heaven." (Acts.1:6-11)*

Once again two men in white witnessing His ascension into heaven, just as there had been two witnesses to His resurrection. All this a relatively short time after Moses and Elijah had met and discussed these matters with Mashiah during the transfiguration. Could it be that these two; Moses and Elijah were appointed to witness each milestone of Mashiah's salvation work? Is it not logical that these same two are the two witnesses appointed to

prepare the way for His return?

It is Moshe and Elijah that match the photo fit Scripture provides particularly concerning the powers of these witnesses,

*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.11:6)*

Now let us refer to the lampstands and olive trees spoken of in the Scriptures.

### ***The Lampstands and the Olive Trees***

Revelation identifies the two witnesses as being YHWH's two lampstands and olive trees,

*"And I shall give unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy one thousand two hundred and sixty days, clad in sackcloth." These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands that are standing before the Elohim of the earth. (Rev.11:3-4).*

The above verse is rather uninformative and for elaboration we are compelled to examine a parallel vision given to the prophet Zechariah,

*And the messenger who was speaking to me came back and woke me up as a man is awakened from sleep. And he said to me, "What do you see?" So I said, "I have looked, and see: a lampstand all of gold with a bowl on top of it, and on the stand seven lamps with seven spouts to the seven lamps. And two olive trees are by it, one at the right of the bowl and the other at its left." Then I responded and spoke to the messenger who was speaking to me, saying, "What are these, my master?" And the messenger who was speaking to me answered and said to me, "Do you not know what these are?" And I said, "No, my master." And he answered and said to me, "This is the word of YHWH to Zerubbabel, 'Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,' said YHWH of hosts. (Zech.4:1-6).*

*Then I responded and said to him, "What are these two olive trees, one at the right of the lampstand and the other at its left?" And I responded a second time and said to him, "What are these two olive branches which empty golden oil from themselves by means of the two gold pipes?" And he answered me and said, "Do you not know what these are?" And I said, "No, my master." And he said, "These are the two anointed ones, who stand beside the Elohim of all the earth." (Zech.4:11-14).*

Zechariah tells us that the lampstand and the olive trees represent the spirit of YHWH and from Revelation we can conclude it is His spirit in the form of two witnesses that will condemn a wicked world. But could the two olive trees also represent the law and the prophets? Was it not the law giver, spoken of in terms of Elohim in the following verse and the prophet that were the two witnesses who confronted Pharaoh in Egypt,

*So YHWH said to Moshe, "See, I have made you an elohim to Pharaoh, and Aharon your brother is your prophet. (Exod.7:1)*

With Moshe and Elijah we again see the law giver and the prophet as was the case in Egypt. Revelation says that these two witnesses tormented all of humanity (Rev.11:10) just as Moshe and Aharon tormented Pharaoh and all Egypt. When we recognise this everything falls into place as to why it could only be these two who could satisfy the prophetic expectations given by Scripture and accomplish the main mission parameters required.

Returning to the account of the transfiguration the question begs, why did Mashiach instruct His disciples not to mention what they had seen?

*And as they came down from the mountain, Yahusha charged them, saying, "Tell the vision to no man, until the Son of man be risen again from the dead." (Matt.17:9).*

## Conclusion

We said earlier that the reason behind YHWH's decision to send the two witnesses is of greater concern than the issue of their identity and nothing could be more correct. We live in a society that is either ignorant of YHWH or is in open rebellion against Him. A society that has thrown away YHWH's rule book. The greatest threat to society today is not weapons of mass destruction but weapons of mass deception, with the Church itself in many instances becoming the proverbial wolf in sheep's clothing. Instead of the Church playing its true role coming out of the world, the world has been enticed into the Church through entertaining music and concert. Rather than the Church impacting the world, the world is impacting the Church and the one route out of the demise has itself become part of the demise. Whilst the Church remains content to preach a gospel of appeasement and accommodation, promoting a placebo worship (exactly what the apostle warned against 2Cor.11:3), the hopelessness of the situation is very real: so real that YHWH has decided the only answer is for Him to separate for Himself a remnant from humanity, through whom He will fulfil His covenant promise to Avraham. What this means is that humanity enmasse will be completely destroyed, Mashiach described the situation in terms of only a few being saved. This being the case considers the following chart,

World Population 2018: 7.6 Billions			
Denomination	World %	Number (Billions)	Commentary
Christians	33.0	2.51	99% Do not believe in the Law of the Scriptures
Muslims	24.0	1.82	
No Religious Affiliation	16.0	1.22	Aethiests etc
Hinduism	15.0	1.14	
Buddhists	7.0	0.53	Would include the Messianic Groups
Minority & Folk or Traditional	5.00	0.38	
Totals	100.0	7.60	
Judaism	0.2	0.14	

It is notable that the third highest number is those who do not believe in a creator.

Scripture tells us that only one third of Jacob will be saved (Zech.13:8-9) that equates to approximately 5 million people. Let's assume there are twice as many 'Messianic' groups, and add another 10 million. Then we have Rev.11:13 which confirms that there will be a repentant few who will come through YHWH's wrath. Again let's guess this number at 500 million (I would include repentant Christians in this figure). For arguments sake we will add 35 million to round the total up to 550 million. On the basis of this calculation 7.05 billion people (93%) will be destroyed. Admittedly we are playing with numbers but it does give some perspective of HaSatan's success and the magnitude of the rebellion awaiting the two witnesses.