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## Who are The Two Witnesses?

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## Where do they appear?

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By Peter Salemi

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*End time events are racing towards the second coming of Jesus Christ. Many prophecies are being fulfilled today! There are two individuals that are on the sidelines right now waiting for God to propelled them into the spotlight, and perform their ministry. These two individuals are the Two Witnesses!*

### Revelation 11

The revealing of Jesus Christ in the last book of the Bible, the book of Revelation, gives us insight into the ministry of these “two prophets” (Rev 11:10). Clearly, these two are individuals, “clothed in sackcloth” (v.3), and are “killed” (v.7), and are not, the old and new Testaments, or the USA and Britain as some people allege. They are two people God has chosen and anointed to do his final witness and warning before Jesus comes again.

The Bible says, “And I will give *power* unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred *and* threescore days, clothed in sackcloth.” (v.1). these are going to prophesy for the three and one half year time called the “great tribulation.” They shall bear witness for 1260 days, the forty-two months the Holy City is trodden down (v.3).

The sackcloth is, “...an emblem of mourning; and the idea is, that they would prophesy in the midst of grief. This would indicate that the time would be one of calamity, or that, in doing this, there would be occasion for their appearing in the emblems of grief, rather than in robes expressive of joy.” (Barnes notes). It is also a symbol of repentance, compare Isa 22:12; Jer 4:8; Jon 3:5; Mat 3:4; Luke 10:13. The two witnesses under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit will call down the judgments of God on sinning mankind, and preaching repentance of their sins.

Now John says, “These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth.” (v.4).

This scripture is the same scripture we read of in Zechariah the fourth chapter that says, “Then answered I, and said unto him, What *are* these two olive trees upon the right *side* of the candlestick and upon the left *side* thereof?

“And I answered again, and said unto him, What be these two olive branches which through the two golden pipes empty the golden oil out of themselves?

“And he answered me and said, Knowest thou not what these be? And I said, No, my lord.

“Then said he, These are the two anointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth.”

(vv.11-14). Two anointed individuals that “empty the golden oil out of themselves.” The oil is a symbol of the Holy Spirit. Earlier in Zechariah’s vision God says to him, “And two olive trees by it, one upon the right side of the bowl, and the other upon the left side thereof.

“So I answered and spake to the angel that talked with me, saying, What are these, my lord?

“Then the angel that talked with me answered and said unto me, Knowest thou not what these be? And I said, No, my lord.

“Then he answered and spake unto me, saying, This is the word of the LORD unto Zerubbabel, saying, *Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit*, saith the LORD of hosts.” (vv.3-6).

“As the lamps burned continually, supplied with oil from a source (the living olive trees) which man did not make” (JFB Commentary).

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The Peoples New Testament writes, “The olive tree was the *source of the oil used to provide for the candlesticks. The candlesticks, burning the oil, gave forth light.* The symbols imply that during this period of 1260 days *God shall have two agencies, bearing divine witness, which shall give forth light to men.* These agencies shall be filled and sustained by the Spirit.” (Emphasis added). The Church of God at this time will be down and out of business of preaching the Gospel and having an organized work due to persecution. God is going to appoint these two individuals to fulfill that task with God’s mighty power to back them up.

### The Coming Elijah

“And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed... 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 11:5-6). Notice the Bible singles out these two particular aspects of their ministry. Fire and plagues. These are the two distinct aspects of two other individuals who had their ministries on earth in the past, MOSES AND ELIJAH! In 2 Kings 1:10-14 Elijah devoured his enemies by fire. He also had the power to shut up heaven so it did not rain for three and a half years, the same duration as the great tribulation 1 Kings 17:1-18:46; James 5:17. Of course the plagues are reminiscent of Moses’ ministry of striking the water, the locusts, the boils etc...on Egypt, Exodus 7-12.

There has been much speculation about the coming of Elijah. Malachi prophesied, “Behold, I will send you *Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD:*” (4:5). The disciples asked Jesus, “...Why then say the scribes that Elias must first come?” (Matthew 17:10). They just received a vision of the kingdom of God on the mount of transfiguration see vv.1-9, and so the context is the same as Malachi’s prophecy.

“And Jesus answered and said unto them, *Elias truly shall first come*, and restore all things.” (v.11). Jesus himself prophesied that Elijah will come first before he comes again. He will come and “restore” all things. This means “Hence, it means to heal, to correct, to put in proper order. Here it means that Elijah would put things in a proper state; he would be the instrument of reforming the people, or of restoring them, in some measure, to proper notions about the Messiah and preparing them for his coming.” (Barnes Notes).

Then Jesus said, “But I say unto you, That Elias is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed. Likewise shall also the Son of man suffer of them. “Then the disciples understood that he spake unto them of John the Baptist.” (vv.12-13). That is, John the Baptist has come, in the spirit and power of Elias. See Luke 1:17.

The Pulpit Commentary says, “*Christ is here speaking of the past, as in the preceding verse he spake of the future.* The common Jewish interpretation confused the two events and the two personages, *reducing them to one.* And this mistake has been committed by many modern expositors.” (Emphasis added). John the Baptist was a type of the Elijah to come. Many felt and still today feel it was Herbert W Armstrong. Many other people believe that they are the coming Elijah. But the Bible is clear that the ministry of the end time Elijah restoring all things is the ministry of one of the two witnesses in Revelation 11.

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Malachi also describes in the fourth chapter the “day of the lord” (v.1), and to “Remember ye the law of *Moses my servant*, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, *with the statutes and judgments*” (v.4). The JFB Commentary makes this assessment, “ ‘Moses’ and ‘Elias’ are here connected with the Lord’s coming, so at the transfiguration they converse with Him, implying that *the law and prophets which had prepared His way were now fulfilled in Him*” (emphasis added). Although it doesn’t say its an individual, but one like Moses is implied that will testify and give witness, as the next verse in Malachi speaks of the coming individual “Elijah” that will come an testify as well. These are the two witnesses, a coming Moses and Elijah who will prepare the way for the coming of Jesus.

### **Killed, but Where?**

The coming Beast and false Prophet will arise on the world scene, and tread down Jerusalem. This is the time of the Tribulation, (Rev 11:1-2). The False Prophet will come into the Temple of God and proclaim he is God (2 Thessalonians 2). Yes the beast and false prophet come into Jerusalem and occupy it. But no where does it say that they make it their home, or new headquarters. The bible speaks of the “seat of the Beast and his Kingdom” (Rev 16:10). The Beast is the Holy Roman Empire led by Germany (Read our booklet Germany in Prophecy). The False Prophet is the Pope. Yes, he will sit in the Temple of God and say he is the Vicar of Christ in the temple, but what about the Vatican?

The Papal seat is in Rome. The Pope will not vacate the Vatican and move to Jerusalem. What will happen as Jeremiah prophesied about the “seething Pot” in the “North” that is going to boil over in Judea/Israel, reveals that the Europeans will conquer and occupy Jerusalem, set up delegates there and administer *their* governments in Jerusalem. Jeremiah says, “For, lo, I will call all the families of the kingdoms of the north, saith the LORD; and they shall come, and they *shall set every one his throne at the entering of the gates of Jerusalem, and against all the walls thereof round about, and against all the cities of Judah.*” (Jer 1:15). So where will the Two Witnesses be during the time of the great tribulation?

### **Rome (That “Great City”)**

Now the Beast comes and kills the Two Witnesses, “And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them.” (Rev 11:7). So the Beast puts an end to their preaching thinking that if they got rid of them, the plagues would stop, as it says, “And they of the people and kindreds and tongues and nations shall see their dead bodies three days and an half, and shall not suffer 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 them that dwelt on the earth” (vv.9-10).

How can the whole world see the two witnesses? The only way today is by the Internet and T.V.

So where are their bodies going to be?

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“And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the *great city*, which *spiritually* is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified.” (v.8). Quickly people will say “Jerusalem.” But it says they lie in the street of “the great city.”

This source says, “Eight times *elsewhere* in the book of Revelation it is used of BABYLON (Rev 14:8; Rev 16:19; Rev 17:18; Rev 18:10, Rev 18:16, Rev 18:18, Rev 18:19, Rev 18:21). In Revelation 21:10 (English Version as to the New Jerusalem), the oldest manuscripts omit ‘the great’ before city, so that it forms no exception.” (JFB Commentary).

The same source concludes that the “great city” here in Revelation 11, “It must, therefore, have an anticipatory reference to the mystical Babylon.”

This source also states, “This identifies the city as Jerusalem, though the Lord was crucified *outside* of the city.” (ibid, emphasis added). Paul said Jesus died “*without* the gate” and the “camp” (Hebrews 13:12, 13). Jesus died OUTSIDE the city of Jerusalem! So it *cannot* mean Jerusalem. So what does it mean?

This great city is called, “And the *woman* which thou sawest is that great city, which *reigneth over the kings of the earth*” (Rev 17:18). In John’s time it was *Rome*, and during the time of the Holy Roman Empire it was *Vatican City*, which is *in* Rome, and it is the city of the Pope. But the JFB Commentary asks, “The difficulty is, how can Jerusalem be called ‘the great city,’ that is, Babylon? By her becoming the world’s capital of idolatrous apostasy, such as Babylon originally was, and then Rome has been; just as she is here called also ‘Sodom and Egypt.’” Is there an answer to this?

It is not speaking of Jerusalem *but* Rome.

God calls the Promised Land, the “glorious land” and the “Holy Land” (Zech 2:12). The mount where the temple stands is called the “holy mountain” (Daniel 11:41, 45), in the end time.

Also in Revelation 11:2, the very *same* chapter, it calls Jerusalem the “holy city.” How could it be then called “Sodom”? This *cannot* mean Jerusalem. So what does it mean when it says, “...where also our Lord was crucified.”? Notice the context of the verse, “*spiritually* called” this great city, “Sodom and Egypt,” then it says, “*where also*” SPIRITUALLY Jesus was crucified. It is speaking *spiritually*, not literally. Vincent Word studies agrees, “Typically or allegorically. Compare 1Co 10:3, 1Co 10:4.” This mystery Babylon city crucified Jesus, *spiritually* speaking, but how?

### **The Falling Away**

The apostle Paul in the book of Hebrews says, “If *they shall fall away*, to renew them again unto repentance; *seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh*, and put *him* to an open shame” (6:6). Those that fall away from the faith have crucified the Lord Jesus all over again, putting to death the “spirit” of God in them, in which is the agent that Jesus dwells inside the Christian, “...And hereby we know that he abideth in us, *by the Spirit* which he hath given

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us...Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because *he hath given us of his Spirit.*" (1 John 3:24; 4:13).

In history there was a great apostasy from the true faith, and the main church that created this apostasy was the church in Rome. The apostle Paul predicted this would happen, "Let no man deceive you by any means: for *that day shall not come*, except there come ***a falling away first***, and ***that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition***;

"Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.

"Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things?

"And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time.

"For the ***mystery of iniquity doth already work***: only he who now letteth *will let*, until he be taken out of the way.

"And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming:

"Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders," (2 Thess 2:3-9). This "man of sin" is the "little horn," the "woman" of Bible prophecy. This is the great city and church, in Rome, mystery Babylon the Great (read our booklet *Who, What is the Beast?* for details). This great fallen church/city, fell away from the truth, and cause many other churches to fall along with it, to become one great universal fallen church, and have crucified the Lord "*afresh.*"

Also, Rome is famous for persecuting the church of God. The Church of God is called the "body of Christ" (see 1 Corinthians 12:27; Ephesians 4:12). When Saul who became the Apostle Paul was persecuting the Church, Christ told him, "Saul, Saul, why *persecutest thou me?*" And he said, "Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, *I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.*" (Acts 9:4-5). If you persecute the church you are persecuting Christ for we are his body. Killing Christians in a "*spiritual*" sense is like "killing Christ" all over again. And the Romans were famous; especially Nero for persecuting Christians, and John wrote the book of revelation during the time Nero was persecuting the Church.

The two witnesses will be in the city of Rome, *not* Jerusalem when they are killed! Vatican City will be the place where the two witnesses will pronounce their judgments, like Moses and Aaron going to Pharaoh saying "let my people go." This is why it is called spiritually "Egypt." The Beast and the false Prophet are a type of "Jannes and Jambres" (2 Tim 3:8), and Pharaoh a type of Satan the Devil. The two witnesses will go before them demanding the release of God people. This is going to take place in Europe, not Jerusalem at, "the seat of the beast; and his kingdom" (Rev 16:10)! The religious seat is in Rome called the "Holy See." The term "see" comes from the Latin word "sedes", meaning "seat," or "throne."

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The Political seat will be the seat of the Beast (Germany). It is a church/state government (Kingdom) since the woman rides the beast.



German Bundestag

In Rome, then, "...when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them." (Rev 11:7). The *political* leader in Rome, at the behest of the Pope, since the Pope will, "...exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed." (Rev 13:12) will demand these two be put to death, and the Beast will send the army to kill them in Vatican City, the city of Rome.

But, after the tragic event, Almighty God, after three days and a half, "...Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them. "And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them." (Rev 11:11-12). God resurrects them to eternal life and meet the Lord in the air (1 Thess 4:16-17). This incredible event will shock the world, before Christ comes and sets up his kingdom.

The Two Witnesses have a great task and responsibility given to them by God. Who are these two people? No one knows, and one should not speculate. We shall know when they perform the great signs that John says they will perform, until that time, speculating is just a waste of time. We as Christians must just get on with the task at hand of preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom, the job that God gave his church; God himself will take care of everything else.