

## Message #72 of *Scripture Beneath The Surface*

### *"Two Witnesses Killed"*

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Hello! Thanks for being with us. Today I'd like to talk about the two witnesses which are referred to in Revelation, chapter 11. This is from a question that came in the mail today, and I always like to try and answer questions. This is a subject which has long been discussed in the church, but I don't think it has ever been explained very well. At least not that I am aware of. There are various assumptions made, but no one really knows who these two witnesses are. Well, I think that's because everyone assumes that these two witnesses are humans. But then, personally, I don't think they are humans. What I think they are is Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. Of course, this is a difficult concept to explain, but today I'd like to try to explain it the best I can. If you don't agree with me, that's fine. No problem here. But I think if you pay particular attention, you will begin to see a different perspective than you've probably ever heard before. So anyway, let's give it a shot.

Now, concerning the two witnesses there is some speculation in the church today that these are either Moses and Elijah, or Elijah and Enoch. I'm not sure how much explanation you've had from my other messages, but let me just touch on a few concepts. First, if the two witnesses were physical people, then Elijah might be one of them, but Moses has already died once. Enoch didn't die, and Elijah didn't, but Moses did. It tells us this in Deuteronomy 34, and that God buried him himself. I don't think scripture supports someone dying twice, and in fact, the Bible tells us in Hebrews 9:27 that death is appointed to men only once. Of course, God cannot be put in a box, so I suppose Moses could die twice if God so decreed it. But basically, Elijah and Enoch are the only physical human possibilities. But if you would, think of the concept of the

two witnesses being Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. This is a spiritual concept, and the reference to these two witnesses would necessarily have to be symbolic. And this is where today's message is coming from. You see, these two witnesses are the two additional testimonies to the written or spoken word of God. God's word is given to the earth in the form of the Old Testament and the New Testament, but in order for the testimony of God to be believed, God has given us the additional confirmation from the witnesses of the life of Jesus Christ and the works of the Holy Spirit in order that the people of earth can believe. To believe God's word requires something to show that it is true. And this is where we had better start today. You see, in order for a witness to be acceptable in any court of law, there must be two or three witnesses. One witness is not enough to condemn a man, but two or three witnesses are. It is this concept of the need for two or three witnesses which establishes the basis for understanding who the two witnesses of Revelation 11 really are.

Now, to the best of my understanding, no one teaches the spiritual perspective of the Bible's concept of acceptable testimony requiring two or three witnesses in order to be believed. However, no testimony can be true unless it is confirmed by two or three witnesses. This is an Old Testament requirement that God gave to the children of Israel. Deut 19:15 says, "One witness shall not rise up against a man for any iniquity, or for any sin, in any sin that he sins. At the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall the matter be established. Matthew 18:16 also refers to this same concept by suggesting that two or three witnesses will establish the truth. And 1 John 5:7 tells us that there are three that give witness in heaven. We know that these three who give witness in heaven are the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is by these three witnesses of God's word that God himself is established. The truth of God's word establishes the Godhead, and at the same time condemns the lies of Satan.

Now, here's an amazing thing that I would like you to see. In John, chapter 5, Jesus makes the very unusual statement that if he bears witness of himself, meaning that he is the only one testifying of his own truthfulness, then his own word, his witness, was not true. Now, of course we know that every word of Jesus Christ is true, that's not a problem. But why would Jesus imply that there was any possibility at all that men should not believe him? But, the reason he said this was that he was emphasizing to the people who were questioning him about whether he was truly who he claimed to be or not, that they didn't have to believe him alone, but that they needed to realize that God himself testified of him, and the Holy Spirit did also. Now, this is borne out in the Old Testament prophecies of Jesus, and God also spoke from heaven on the day Jesus was Baptized, saying that he was his beloved Son. In addition, just as Jesus referred to in John 5:36, the works that he did also bore witness to him, and that witness was the Holy Spirit. Jesus explained in Matthew 12:28 that he cast out devils by the Holy Spirit of God.

You see, it is the Father which confirms the testimony of Jesus, and it is the Holy Spirit that also confirms the testimony of Jesus. In the same sense, it is God who has spoken his word, and that word has been preached and written down. It is God's testimony of himself. However, in the same sense that Jesus said his own words were not true unless accompanied by the witnesses of

the Father and the Holy Spirit, God's word also is confirmed by the very life of Jesus Christ and by the power of God through his Holy Spirit.

Now, take a look at this. We actually see this concept of the witness of God's spoken and written word, accompanied by the additional testimony of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit symbolized in the book of Zechariah, chapter 4. It tells us that Zechariah saw a lampstand with seven lamps on it, and oil for the light of it was fed to it from two olive trees, one on the right side and one on the left. Now first, the number seven implies perfection. Notice in Zechariah 4:10 the reference to the stone with seven eyes. This is referring to Jesus Christ, in that Jesus is the perfect manifestation of the word of God on earth. Also, Revelation 5:6 refers to the Lamb of God as having seven horns and seven eyes. Horns represent power, and therefore the Lamb of God is perfect in power because he has seven horns. It also demonstrates that Jesus is God, because no one can have perfect power except God himself. In the same sense, the seven eyes refer to the Lamb of God, who is perfect in seeing, or understanding. Jesus, the Lamb of God is perfect in knowledge.

Now, notice that this lampstand in Zechariah 4, is fed oil from two olive trees, and verse 14 tells us that these two olive trees are the two anointed ones which stand before the Lord of all the earth.

Did you catch that? These two anointed ones are said to stand before the Lord. This standing before the Lord is actually symbolized in the Old Testament Temple of worship. Solomon's temple was set up with the place of God being in the Most Holy Place. In order to get to God, a person would have to cross the porch, go through the Holy Place, and then enter into the Most Holy Place where God's presence dwelled. Now, when crossing the porch and entering into the Holy Place, a person would have to pass two giant pillars on the porch. These were situated on the right and the left at the entrance to the Holy Place. These two pillars didn't hold anything up, but only stood there, the one on the right hand and the other one on the left, as pillars of witness. These pillars are symbolic of the two anointed ones of Zechariah 4:14. The names of the pillars, according to scripture, are, Jachin and Boaz. The pillar, Jachin, was on the right, and I equate that with Jesus Christ sitting on the right hand of God. The other pillar was called Boaz, and it was on the left, and I equate this pillar with the Holy Spirit. Just as we must be born of both water and of the Spirit, the symbolism of the temple required that anyone entering into the presence of God could only do so if they came to God by passing between the two pillars. It is this Bible symbolism which points to the requirement of Christians of having to accept Jesus Christ, and then receiving the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

Now, it is important to recognize that these two pillars are pillars of testimony, and that their purpose is to confirm the Holy word of God as being true. Jesus actually accomplished his part of this testimony by his life and death on the cross, and the Holy Spirit confirmed God's words were truly powerful by doing the miracles that Jesus spoke. Interestingly enough, this arrangement shows that no part of the Godhead can function without the other two parts. The Father is not God alone, neither is the Holy Spirit God alone, and neither is Jesus God alone, but

all three, giving perfect witness of each other confirms the overall testimony, and the result that is established is that God can be believed, and Jesus can be believed, and the Holy Spirit can be believed, and God, in three persons, can be trusted because these three are never so individual that they vary in content or purpose. Just as humans are made of a three part system of Body, Soul, and Spirit, so is God made up of a three part system of God's spoken word, the Father, God's manifested word, the Son, and God's demonstrated power, the Holy Spirit. Just as we humans have an existing soul, an outward body, and a spirit, so does God exist, and has a body, and has a spirit. The body of God is Jesus Christ, and the spirit of God is the Holy Spirit.

In Scripture, whenever a pillar was reared up for a purpose of a covenant, it did not support anything. It was a pillar of witness, and it established a covenant. The two pillars on Solomon's porch were symbolic of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit, two anointed ones by God who stood at the entrance to God's house. No one could come into the presence of God without giving heed to these two pillars of witness. When we Christians accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, we are born again in spirit, and we receive the Holy Spirit who will dwell within us. Once we have received these two pillars of witness, we have been made righteous through the blood of Jesus Christ, and can then enter into the very presence of God. In the symbolism of the Temple, no man can enter into the presence of God without first getting past the two pillars. Therefore, no man can enter in to the presence of God without first accepting the testimony of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit.

Now, notice that in Zechariah 4, verse 6, it says that what Zechariah saw was the word of the Lord. This word of the Lord was to Zerubbabel, but most importantly we must recognize that it was telling us that what Zechariah was seeing was the word of the Lord. He was seeing the testimony of God, represented by the Lampstand, and he was seeing the confirmation of God's spoken word, represented by the two olive trees. Just as these two olive trees provided the oil for the lamps, Jesus Christ and God's Holy Spirit provide the power of God's word. Everyone knows that an oil lamp does not provide light by itself. In order for a lamp to shed light, it must have oil added to it. A lamp does not shine of itself, but only in combination with the oil. It's the same thing with God's word. God's word is true, but in order for the truth to be known, God's word must shed light into the spiritual eyes of mankind. Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit provide the confirming witnesses which shed light into the world. God's word, of itself, just like Jesus' word, of itself, cannot be known to be true. But when the additional witnesses of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit are added, then the world can see the light. That's why Jesus said that we are the light of the world, because we witness of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Now, notice something else. In Zechariah, there is only one lampstand. This symbolizes the Old Testament. It is God's word from the Old Testament perspective, and this is what Zechariah saw. Now, look at Revelation, chapter 11. Starting in verse three we see these same symbols of the lampstand and the two olive trees. Only this time there are two lampstands instead of one. This implies the addition of the New Testament of God's word. Not a replacement of God's word, but an addition to it which will shed more light to the world than just the one lampstand of the Old Testament. The Old Testament shed light, but the New Testament added additional light

in order for the world to see God more clearly. The olive trees are the same, and here again, just as in Zechariah, 4:14, it tells us that these are the two witnesses which stand before the Lord of all the earth. So we have the two lampstands, which are the Old Testament and the New Testament, and we have the two witnesses which stand before the Lord of all the earth.

So, what we have is Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit giving witness to God's word, confirming that God's word is true. This means that the Father testifies with his word, and the Son testifies of that word by manifesting it, or should we say, showing it outwardly, and then the Holy Spirit testifies of it by bringing forth fruit whenever and wherever the word of God is preached. Oh, and most importantly, notice in John 5:34 that Jesus tells us that the witness of men, although it is a truthful witness, cannot be received by him. Jesus said that he did not receive the witness of men, but that the witnesses which testified in agreement with him was the Father and the Holy Spirit. The witness of men, although truthful, can never establish God's word as truth. The only testimony which can establish God as truth is the testimony of God himself. And this is because the testimony of man is only testifying to something that has already been established, whereas God's testimony is established by him himself. God is the only one who knows the completeness of his own word, therefore it is only God's testimony which can establish that truth. No one else has first hand knowledge of it, but at best, our knowledge of God is second hand because God has revealed it to us after it was already an established fact.

This is very important in our look at the two witnesses in Zechariah 4:14 and Revelation 11:3-4. The only witnesses which can prove the word of God to be true is the additional witness of the Godhead itself. God testifies of himself three times. Once by his spoken word, once by the outward manifestation of the life of Jesus Christ, and thirdly by the additional witness of the Holy Spirit as he brings forth the miracles, signs, and wonders for the people of earth to see. The Lord our God is one Lord, and he gives witness in three different ways. Just as we are body, soul, and spirit, God is a three part God. People believe our word in the same way. They hear us proclaim something, then they see us act it out each and every day, and then they see the fruit come from our lives. It is hearing, seeing, and receiving the fruit of God's word, and it comes from the three witnesses of the word, which are the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

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The most difficult part for Christians is to see how the two witnesses of God could possibly be killed as it tells us in Revelation, chapter 11. We can imagine Elijah or Enoch being killed because they are humans. But Jesus is no longer on the earth in the form of flesh and blood, for the church is now the body of Christ. We are his body. Also, it is difficult to see how the Holy Spirit could be killed because the Holy Spirit is of course spirit, and therefore cannot be physically killed. But the killing of these two witnesses are not physical, but spiritual, in that when the end comes, the world will seek to destroy the two witnesses which give the confirming testimony of God's word. And the way they will do it will be something like this. They will become so stressed out in the last days and will be so angry at Christians who are proclaiming the soon coming of Jesus, that they will seek to pass a decree in the earth that God, in any form, can be worshiped, but that no one can claim the message of Jesus Christ and God's Holy Spirit.

You see, the Bible tells us that in the last days the two witnesses of God will be killed and that the world will not allow the bodies of these two witnesses to be put in graves. Not allowing them to be put into graves means that the world will insist that Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit are not just being rejected as witnesses of God's word, but are in fact non-existent. The world will insist that Jesus and God's Spirit are not being laid to rest, but that they never had a beginning in the first place. This will be Satan's attempt to take away the two testimonies of God's word, and therefore God's word will have to stand alone by itself. There would be no confirmation of God's word, no two or three witnesses to establish the truth of it. And Satan knows very well that if the word of Jesus himself cannot be considered to be true if there are no further witnesses confirming it, then certainly God's word will also be rejected without the additional two witnesses.

Satan is no dupe. God actually refers to him as being wiser than Daniel. Satan knows how important the extra two witnesses are, because without the additional witnesses of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit, the word of the Father would only be one testimony, and everyone knows that people don't believe something just because one person testifies of it. People only believe a witness if there is further confirming testimony. What Revelation 11 is referring to is Satan's last great push to unseat God from his throne by destroying his word. Satan is a liar, and Satan's whole aim in unseating God and taking his place on the throne is to make God's word into a lie and then to proclaim his own word as true. God is the almighty God because his word is true. And of course, Satan will never be God because Satan's word is not true. But Satan will try to destroy the truth of God's word, and he thinks that when these two witnesses are discredited, then he himself will reign. However, Christians know differently. And we also have the proof of it in Revelation 11:11-12 which tells us that these two witnesses of God could not be put to death forever any more than Jesus could be killed forever on the cross of Calvary. The two witnesses of God's word will seem to have been put down by the wicked people of the world, but very shortly they will rise up and show that nothing can ever exalt itself against the truth. Just as Jesus rose physically from the grave, so will truth arise at the last day. Satan and his people will have thought they had finally found a way to escape the condemnation from God's word, but in the end, the word will stand and the wicked will be condemned.