

37 – END TIMES: THE TRIBULATION - PART 5

I. The Ministry of the Two Witnesses (Revelation 11:3-13)

A. The Commissioning of the Two (Revelation 11:3)

- Two witnesses are commission to proclaim God's word for 3 ½ years.

Biblical Note: Two Witnesses

The two witnesses are described as a fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecy. They are described as the two olive trees and the two lampstands that stand before the Lord of all the earth (Revelation 11:4). There has been much speculation concerning the identity of the two witnesses. There are two main views concerning their identity. (1) They are two men sent to prophesy to Jews during the tribulation. Various names of Old Testament believers have been proposed for the two witnesses. (a) Enoch and Elijah - This is because both did not experience death as they were taken to heaven (Genesis 5:24; 2 Kings 2:11). (b) Moses and Elijah - This is because the actions of the two witnesses bear much resemblance to Moses and Elijah. Moses and Elijah also appeared with Jesus at his transfiguration (Matthew 17:1-7). (2) They symbolize the witnessing church.

B. Their Identity (Revelation 11:4)

- John points out that they are a fulfillment of Zechariah's prophecy.

Scripture Zechariah 4:1-14

C. God's Protection of the Two (Revelation 11:5)

- Those who wish to harm the two prophets will be killed.

D. Their Power (Revelation 11:6)

- They will demonstrate power through great supernatural signs.

E. The Killing of the Two (Revelation 11:7)

- When their ministry is complete, the Antichrist will kill them.

F. The Location of Their Bodies (Revelation 11:8)

- Their bodies will be left to exposure in Jerusalem.

G. The World-Wide Witness and Celebration (Revelation 11:9-10)

- The world will see their bodies and celebrate their deaths.

H. The Resurrection of the Two Witnesses (Revelation 11:11-12)

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- Great fear grips the world as the two witnesses come back to life.
- The two witnesses are called back to heaven.

I. The Great Earthquake (Revelation 11:13)

- A great earthquake strikes Jerusalem and kills 7,000 people.

II. The Beast Out of the Earth (Revelation 13:11-18)

A. The Introduction of the Second Beast (Revelation 13:11-12)

1. The Beast out of the Earth (Revelation 13:11)

- John sees another beast that comes from the earth.
- Some scholars feel that he is a Jew.

Biblical Note: The Second Beast (The False Prophet)

The second beast is the False Prophet whose task it is to point people to the Antichrist. In Revelation 13:11, he appears like a meek and gentle lamb when in reality he has the heart of a destroyer. The focus of the False Prophet is religion as he causes the world to worship the Antichrist. The False Prophet will have the power to perform great miracles. He will have the power to counterfeit the miracles of God, such as calling down fire from heaven. He deceives the people into building an image which can be used as a focal point for worship of the Antichrist. When Jesus Christ returns in his Second Coming, the False Prophet will be immediately judged with the Antichrist and cast into the Lake of Fire.

See: Revelation 13:11-18; 16:13; 19:20; 20:10

2. The Beast's Power and Authority (Revelation 13:12)

- This beast receives his authority from the first beast.
- He causes the whole world to worship the first beast.

B. The Miracles of the Second Beast (Revelation 13:13-15)

1. Fire from Heaven (Revelation 13:13)

- He causes fire to come down from heaven.

2. His Deception (Revelation 13:14a)

- He deceives the entire world with great signs.

3. The Image of the Beast (Revelation 13:14b-15)

- He creates an image of the first beast that is to be worshiped.

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- He has those who refuse to worship killed.

C. The Mark of the Beast (Revelation 13:16-18)

1. The Imposition of the Mark (Revelation 13:16)

- The second beast has everyone receive a mark.

Biblical Note: The Mark of the Beast

The mark refers to the Roman use of a seal or mark connected with the emperor which conveyed official sanction. So the Beast will use such a mark to identify those who are loyal to him. Those without the mark will be deemed traitors and boycotted by the commercial system the Beast controls. Those without the mark will die from exposure or starvation or illness as a result of not being able to purchase what they need. Those with the mark will suffer as well (Revelation 14:9-11). Those who receive the mark will suffer the wrath of God in eternity. See: Revelation 13:16,17; 14:9,11; 15:2; 16:2; 19:20; 20:4

2. The Purpose of the Mark (Revelation 13:17)

- This mark allows people to buy and sell.

3. The Number of the Beast (Revelation 13:18)

- The writer warns us to be aware of the significance of the mark.

Biblical Note: The Number of the Beast

The most complex issue regarding the mark of the beast is the number 666. Many observations have been made about this number. However, no one knows exactly what 666 means.