

Eschatology 13

The Great Tribulation 4

1. **Revelation 10-11:** Interlude-No more delay, the little scroll and the two witnesses.
 - a. **INTERLUDE:** (CH10-11:15) These Interludes serve a dramatic purpose and also show God's grace and mercy allowing an unbelieving world to have another opportunity for repentance. With the prior events it is as if God brings things to the brink, then pulls back a little to grant mankind one more time to repent.
 - i. The angel of Ch 10, raised his hand and swore by him who lives forever that the end is irrevocably set in motion, that there should be no more delay.
There is absolutely no turning back.
 1. "But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance." 2 Peter 3: 8-9
 - b. **THE LITTLE SCROLL:** The angel brings John an open scroll. It contains a message for the world. God's word is bittersweet. The believer tastes its sweetness, but John's stomach churns at the bitter message he must make known to those who refuse God.
 - c. **THE TWO WITNESSES:** At midpoint of the Tribulation period God will place two powerful witnesses on public display in Jerusalem.
 - i. They are given supernatural power to prophesy, to perform miracles and to speak the truth boldly without fear of being captured or killed.
 - ii. **THEY WITNESS WITH GOD'S AUTHORITY FOR 1260 DAYS.** (Ch.11:3)
 1. This is the same length of time as the 42 months in verse
 - a. The 42 months in turn is 3 ½ years, which is exactly one half of the 7 year tribulation.
 2. This also corresponds to the evil dictators reign in chapter 13, verse 5.
 - iii. **THEIR IDENTITY:** Who are these two witness'
 1. Bible scholars are split on the issue of who these men are. One possibility is that they are Enoch and Elijah since these two people were taken to heaven without dying. It is also possible that they will be Moses and Elijah since these two appeared with Jesus in at his transfiguration.
 - iv. **THE TWO OLIVE TREE'S AND THE TWO LAMPSTANDS (CH11:-4):** The witnesses have an unique, continual empowering from the Holy Spirit, as

shown in Zechariah's olive trees and oil lamps picture (Zechariah 4:2-3; 4:14).

1. The passage from Zechariah had its first application to two men in Zechariah's day: Joshua and Zerubbabel. "Just as these two witnesses were raised up to be lampstands or witnesses for God and were empowered by olive oil representing the power of the Holy Spirit, so the two witnesses of Revelation 11 will likewise execute their prophetic office." (Walvoord)
 2. In the picture from Zechariah, oil lamps are filled directly from olive trees which "pipe" oil right to the lamps. This is a picture of continual, abundant supply. If we will be witnesses, we must first have something to witness – our own personal encounter with Jesus Christ. Then, we must have the power of the Holy Spirit to bring forth the story of what we have witnessed effectively.
- v. PROTECTION FROM GOD: "And if anyone wants to harm them, fire proceeds from their mouth and devours their enemies." The two witnesses have special protection from God, similar to Elijah's in 2 Kings 1.
- vi. THE DEATH OF THE TWO WITNESSES: When their work is finished, God will allow them to be put to death.
1. The place of their death will be Jerusalem, probably the temple mount. The same city Jesus was put to death.
 - a. This city that is greatly loved by God is known for killing the prophets. (Mathew 23:37)
- vii. THE EARTH SEE'S AND REJOICES OVER THE DEATHS OF THE TWO WITNESSES: The fact that this is seen by all people, tribes, tongues, and nations is perhaps an oblique prophecy of modern mass media. (Ch. 11: 9-10)
1. It is amazing – and not far-fetched at all – to think of a live, worldwide broadcast on CNN, "Live from Jerusalem," and seeing the amazing scene described here taking place where their bodies lay for 3 ½ days.
 2. Because these two prophets tormented those who dwell on the earth: The preaching of these two witnesses and their call to repentance was a torment for many, because they could not stand to hear the truth while they loved their lie. The world continues to grow away from the truth of God.
- viii. THE REVIVING OF THE TWO WITNESSES: God miraculously brings them back to life. (ch11:11)

1. They stood on their feet, and great fear fell on those who saw them: As this happens before the eyes of the watching world, the enemies of these two witnesses are horrified and astonished.
 2. Come up here: The earth is not worthy of these two witnesses, so God simply calls them home, and they ascended to heaven in a cloud.
 3. In the same hour there was a great earthquake: An earthquake brings judgment, and moves many to give glory to God. But it remains to be seen if this will become true repentance unto salvation.
- ix. THE SEVENTH TRUMPET (Ch11:15-19): The Seventh Trumpet, like the Seventh Seal, does not introduce an activity on earth, but looks to Heaven in anticipation of the next series of events. It gives way to the 7 bowls of God's wrath.
1. God is taking his great power and beginning to reign on earth.
 2. This last trumpet introduces the events leading up to the Battle of Armageddon.
 3. Again we see a Heavenly scene of worship.