

# IDENTIFYING THE TWO WITNESSES

## AN EXPLORATORY STUDY ON THE TWO WITNESSES OF REV 11:3

*"This is extremely obscure; the conjectures of interpreters are as unsatisfactory as they are endless on this point. Those who wish to be amused or bewildered, may have recourse both to ancients and moderns on this subject." - Adam Clarke on Revelation 11:3*

### 1. Hannakuh

- a. An 8 day feast of the (re)dedication of the 2<sup>nd</sup> temple in Jerusalem – 1Macc 4:36
- b. Unlike Christmas, it appears in the Bible in John 10:22-42
- c. Called the Festival of Lights, b/c of the miracle of the candlestick in the temple
- d. Jesus was called the Light of the World – the ever burning light in the temple

### 2. Malachi 4:4-5 – Setting the Stage

- a. Mal 4:4-5, Three men here: Moses (law), Elijah (prophets), and the LORD
  - i. Elijah comes before the Lord to bring Israel into remembrance of the law.
  - ii. It never says Moses will come.
  - iii. The "dreadful day" has not come yet, but... Matt 3:7, Acts 2:16,20
- b. Another man gets added to the list – John the Baptist
  - i. Why does he concern the prophecy? Jesus came... the Messenger came
- c. John the Baptist was in the spirit of Elias - Luke 1:16-18, Matt 3:4 cf. 2 Kings 1:8
  - i. Jesus says John is Elijah IF they would receive it – Matt 11:8-15; 17:11-13
  - ii. One man means another – Acts 2:25-31 wasn't David, but Christ
  - iii. Mal 3:1 is fulfilled in John, but only partially, since Jesus comes again
  - iv. They did not receive it, the kingdom did not come, will Elijah come again?
- d. The prophecy of Mal 3:1 fulfilled in John the Baptist
  - i. Apparently, the Elijah is the messenger of the LORD preparing the way
  - ii. The preparer of the way, was John, giving him that position of Elijah
  - iii. The prophecy is interrupted, but we have seen that before
  - iv. What they didn't see: LORD comes twice. There could be two preparers
  - v. Why would we think there would be two Elijahs? Read Revelation 11

### 3. Revelation 11

- a. Two Witnesses – Who are they?
  - i. Joshua (high priest) & Zerubbabel – Hag 1:1, Hag 1:14
  - ii. Enoch & Elijah; Peter & Paul; Moses & Aaron; The Jews - Two Messiahs
  - iii. Priest & King; OT & NT; Jew and Gentiles
  - iv. Symbol of the small group of church witnesses against Antichrist (Rome)
  - v. Moses & Elijah – The best candidates for taking the Bible literally
- b. Prophecy 1260 days – 3.5 years, 42 months, half of the 7 years remaining
  - i. Remnant (woman) in the wilderness for 1260 days – Rev 12:6
  - ii. Elijah prevented the rain for 3.5 years – James 5:17
  - iii. Elijah was part of the remnant – Rom 11:2-4
- c. "clothes in sackcloth" – not the same as John, but still the clothes of suffering
- d. Olive trees and Candlesticks
  - i. Zech 4 – The angel does not even tell who they are
  - ii. Joshua and Zerubbabel keep Israel going (remnant), like Moses and Elijah
  - iii. Psa 52:8 – David is like a green olive tree because of his faithfulness

- e. Devouring fire
    - i. Moses sent fire to kill the enemies – Num 16:28-35
    - ii. Elijah sent fire to kill his enemies – 2 Kings 1:10-11
    - iii. Jesus will devour with the words of his mouth – Rev 1:16, 2:16, 19:15
  - f. Their Powers
    - i. Rain: Elijah had this power in Jam 5:17, 1 Kings 17:1, Moses' law said this
    - ii. Waters to blood, plagues: Moses did this once already in Exodus
  - g. "kill them" – which is the reason people replace Moses with Enoch
4. **The connection of the three men** – Moses, Elijah, And the LORD
- a. Moses = law, Elijah = prophets = Acts 24:14, Luke 16:29, Luke 24:44
  - b. Moses, Elijah, and the LORD fasted for 40 days on the Lord's provision
  - c. They all three were on mountains during their 40 days – 1 Kings 19:4,8
  - d. They all made sacrifice for Israel – 1 Kings 19:4, 8
  - e. Mt Transfiguration: all three were there – Matt 16:28-17:1; Luke 9:1-2