

Revelation 11-The Two Witnesses

Let's take a short revisit of the last clause of Daniel's 70 week prophecy Daniel 9:27

Dan 9:27 NIV He will confirm a covenant with many for one 'seven.' In the middle of the 'seven' he will put an end to sacrifice and offering. And at the temple he will set up an abomination that causes desolation, until the end that is decreed is poured out on him."

I think KJV does the best interpretation of this part of the verse from my standpoint...

- KJV - "and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate."

"and for the overspreading of abominations" -- The idea is first that Jesus caused sacrifice to cease by his death -- (but the Jews continued to offer sacrifice) - which at that time would have been an abomination...since it signifies a rejection of God's ultimate sacrifice, Jesus on the cross.

The word for "overspreading" is an interested one

It is translated often as "wings" in the Bible - as here

- Deu 32:9-12 ESV But the LORD's portion is his people, Jacob his allotted heritage. 10 "He found him in a desert land, and in the howling waste of the wilderness; he encircled him, he cared for him, he kept him as the apple of his eye. 11 Like an eagle that stirs up its nest, that flutters over its young, spreading out its wings, catching them, bearing them on its pinions, 12 the LORD alone guided him, no foreign god was with him.

It is also translated as skirt -

- Rth 3:7-9 ESV And when Boaz had eaten and drunk, and his heart was merry, he went to lie down at the end of the heap of grain. Then she came softly and uncovered his feet and lay down. 8 At midnight the man was startled and turned over, and behold, a woman lay at his feet! 9 He said, "Who are you?" And she answered, "I am Ruth, your servant. Spread your wings over your servant, for you are a redeemer." [Ruth 3:9 KJV And he said, Who art thou? And she answered, I am Ruth thine handmaid: **spread therefore thy skirt over thine handmaid**; for thou art a near kinsman.]

This is very similar to the words of Jesus

- Mat 23:37-38 ESV "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often would I have gathered your children together **as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing!** 38 See, your house is left to you desolate.

The idea is the LORD is the one who wanted to gather them under his wings, or cover them with His skirt as the true Redeemer Kinsman, yet they desired the overspreading of abominations (idols) - that is rather than be covered by the skirt of the LORD their redeemer, or rather than come under His wing, they turned to abominations and because of that their house was left desolate.

Here are some Scriptures that reveal the heart of the LORD toward Israel as they go after

abominations or idols in place of Him

- Eze 11:21 KJV But as for them whose **heart walketh after the heart of their detestable things and their abominations**, I will recompense their way upon their own heads, saith the Lord GOD.
- Eze 20:7-8 KJV Then said I unto them, Cast ye away every man the abominations of his eyes, and defile not yourselves with the idols of Egypt: I am the LORD your God. 8 But they rebelled against me, and would not hearken unto me: **they did not every man cast away the abominations of their eyes**, neither did they forsake the idols of Egypt: then I said, I will pour out my fury upon them, to accomplish my anger against them in the midst of the land of Egypt.
- Eze 20:30 KJV Wherefore say unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Are ye polluted after the manner of your fathers? and **commit ye whoredom after their abominations?**

Here Isaiah describes the sacrifices as abominations -- NOTE: not the same time period, but just showing how the LORD looked at the sacrifices when their hearts were not in the right place

- Isa 1:11-14 KJV To what purpose is the multitude of your **sacrifices** unto me? saith the LORD: I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he goats. 12 When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand, to tread my courts? 13 Bring no more vain **oblations**; ***incense is an abomination*** unto me; the new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; ***it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting***. 14 Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth: they are a trouble unto me; ***I am weary to bear them***.

“he shall make it desolate”

I think it is talking about Jesus - He made it desolate - this is a tie back to His comments in Mat 24 and Luk 21

- Mat 23:37-38 ESV "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing! 38 See, **your house is left to you desolate**.
- Luk 21:20 ESV "But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its **desolation has come near**.

“even until the consummation”

Could be talking about the end of the AD 70 siege or (may be speaking about the end of the age as well - one of those telescopic prophesies) - after all His house is still desolate - actually non-existent. This scripture in Luke again stretches the timeline of the being trampled by Gentiles “**until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled**” - which I think ties this to Rev 11

- Luk 21:24 ESV They will fall by the edge of the sword and be led captive among all nations, and Jerusalem will be trampled underfoot by the Gentiles, **until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled**.

“and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate”

The word desolate here - can be "desolator" also, could be talking about Titus the desolator in AD 70, and/or the beast in Revelation.

The Second Woe

Rev 11:1-2 NIV I was given a reed like a **measuring rod** and was told, "Go and measure the temple of God and the altar, with its worshipers.

He was given a measuring rod

- **There is a similar event that took place in Ezekiel** Eze 40:1-4 NIV In the twenty-fifth year of our exile, at the beginning of the year, on the tenth of the month, in the fourteenth year after the fall of the city--on that very day the hand of the LORD was on me and he took me there. 2 In visions of God he took me to the land of Israel and set me on a very high mountain, on whose south side were some buildings that looked like a city. 3 He took me there, and I saw a man whose appearance was like bronze; he was standing in the gateway **with a linen cord and a measuring rod** in his hand. 4 The man said to me, "Son of man, look carefully and listen closely and pay attention to everything I am going to show you, for that is why you have been brought here. Tell the people of Israel everything you see."

Go and measure the temple of God

There is disagreement about the temple

Some views of Revelation (particularly dispensational pre-millennialism) **require a physical temple where the Antichrist will be briefly seated**

- 2Th 2:3-4 NIV Don't let anyone deceive you in any way, for that day will not come until the rebellion occurs and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the man doomed to destruction. 4 He will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God or is worshiped, so that **he sets himself up in God's temple, proclaiming himself to be God.**
 - Because of this, there is a lot of excitement generated around the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem
 - People point to the Temple in Ezekiel as the next temple to be built
 - There are 8 chapters in Ezekiel dedicated to the description and measurements of a temple...which some believe to be the temple that will be erected in Jerusalem and will be in place during the tribulation period.

Other views do not require the temple

The fact that the introduction of a future temple would include the reintroduction of animal sacrifice makes it difficult for many believers to embrace this idea. Their view is that Christ died once and there is no more sacrifice for sin.

- 1Pe 3:18 NIV For Christ also **suffered once for sins**, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive in the Spirit.

In the New Testament - usage of temple can also refer to:

The body of Jesus

- Joh 2:19-22 NIV Jesus answered them, "**Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days.**" 20 They replied, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and you are going to raise it in three days?" 21 But **the temple he had spoken of was his body.** 22 After he was raised from the dead, his disciples recalled what he had said. Then they believed the scripture and the words that Jesus had spoken.

Christians

- 1Co 3:16-17 NIV Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in your midst? 17 If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy that person; for God's temple is sacred, **and you together are that temple.**
- 2Co 6:14-16 NIV Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness? 15 What harmony is there between Christ and Belial? Or what does a believer have in common with an unbeliever? 16 What agreement is there between the temple of God and idols? **For we are the temple of the living God.** As God has said: "I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people.
- Heb 3:5-6 ESV Now Moses was faithful in all God's house as a servant, to testify to the things that were to be spoken later, 6 but Christ is faithful over God's house as a son. **And we are his house** if indeed we hold fast our confidence and our boasting in our hope.

The church made up of Jew and Gentile

- Eph 2:13-22 NIV But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ. 14 For he himself is our peace, who has made the two groups one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, 15 by setting aside in his flesh the law with its commands and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new humanity out of the two, thus making peace, 16 and in one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility. 17 He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near. 18 For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit. 19 Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God's people and also members of his household, 20 built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. 21 In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become **a holy temple in the Lord.** 22 And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.

A temple that is NOT physical

- Rev 3:12 NIV **The one** who is victorious **I will make a pillar in the temple of my God.** Never again will they leave it. I will write on them the name of my God and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which is coming down out of heaven from my God; and I will also write on them my new name.

- 1Pe 2:5 ESV you yourselves **like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house**, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

The LORD God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple

- Rev 21:21-23 NIV The twelve gates were twelve pearls, each gate made of a single pearl. The great street of the city was of gold, as pure as transparent glass. **22 I did not see a temple in the city, because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple.** 23 The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp.

Malachi speaks about a day where offerings would not be made in the temple

- Mal 1:7-11 NIV "By offering defiled food on my altar. "But you ask, 'How have we defiled you?' "By saying that the LORD's table is contemptible. 8 When you offer blind animals for sacrifice, is that not wrong? When you sacrifice lame or diseased animals, is that not wrong? Try offering them to your governor! Would he be pleased with you? Would he accept you?" says the LORD Almighty. 9 "Now plead with God to be gracious to us. With such offerings from your hands, will he accept you?"--says the LORD Almighty. 10 "Oh, that one of you would shut the temple doors, so that you would not light useless fires on my altar! I am not pleased with you," says the LORD Almighty, "and I will accept no offering from your hands. **11 My name will be great among the nations, from where the sun rises to where it sets. In every place incense and pure offerings will be brought to me, because my name will be great among the nations,**" says the LORD Almighty.

Jesus made a distinction about true worship vs location

- Joh 4:19-24 NIV "Sir," the woman said, "I can see that you are a prophet. 20 Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem." 21 "Woman," Jesus replied, "believe me, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. 22 You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews. 23 Yet a time is coming and has now come when the **true worshipers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, *for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks.*** 24 God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth."

Mt Zion is more than a physical location

- Heb 12:18-24 NIV You have not come to a mountain that can be touched and that is burning with fire; to darkness, gloom and storm; 19 to a trumpet blast or to such a voice speaking words that those who heard it begged that no further word be spoken to them, 20 because they could not bear what was commanded: "If even an animal touches the mountain, it must be stoned to death." 21 The sight was so terrifying that Moses said, "I am trembling with fear." **22 But you have come to Mount Zion, to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem.** You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly, 23 **to the church of the firstborn**, whose names are written in heaven. You have come to God, the Judge of all, to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, 24 to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.

So what about the temple?

I don't know if a temple will be rebuilt in the last days. But my sense is if so, it would NOT be by the direction of the LORD - as that would be taking a step backward in His redemptive process. (i.e. after THE PERFECT sacrifice of Christ, going back to animal sacrifice). This also leads to another discussion, and that is - **does the LORD have two plans for salvation, one for the Jew and a different one for the Gentile?**

Should the focus of Christians be toward encouraging the Jews to rebuild the temple and reestablishing the old sacrificial system, or should our call be pointing them to the true Messiah, Jesus Christ, and through Christ and only through faith in Him to be grafted back into their own olive tree?

- Rom 11:19-36 NIV You will say then, "Branches were broken off so that I could be grafted in." 20 Granted. But **they were broken off because of unbelief**, and you stand by faith. Do not be arrogant, but tremble. 21 For if God did not spare the natural branches, he will not spare you either. 22 Consider therefore the kindness and sternness of God: sternness to those who fell, but kindness to you, provided that you continue in his kindness. Otherwise, you also will be cut off. 23 And if they do not persist in unbelief, they will be grafted in, for **God is able to graft them in again**. 24 After all, if you were cut out of an olive tree that is wild by nature, and contrary to nature were grafted into a cultivated olive tree, how much more readily will these, the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree! 25 **I do not want you to be ignorant of this mystery**, brothers and sisters, so that you may not be conceited: **Israel has experienced a hardening in part until the full number of the Gentiles has come in**, 26 and in this way all Israel will be saved. As it is written: "The deliverer will come from Zion; he will turn godlessness away from Jacob. 27 And this is my covenant with them when I take away their sins." 28 As far as the gospel is concerned, they are enemies for your sake; but as far as election is concerned, they are loved on account of the patriarchs, 29 for God's gifts and his call are irrevocable. 30 Just as **you who were at one time disobedient to God have now received mercy as a result of their disobedience**, 31 **so they too have now become disobedient in order that they too may now receive mercy as a result of God's mercy to you**. 32 ***For God has bound everyone over to disobedience so that he may have mercy on them all.*** 33 **Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God!** How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out! 34 "Who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been his counselor?" 35 "Who has ever given to God, that God should repay them?" 36 For from him and through him and for him are all things. To him be the glory forever! Amen.

"And the Altar"

- This is the altar of incense which is in the Holy Place (the brazen altar was in the outer court which is excluded in this measuring process)
- **This is our praise and worship** - Psa 141:2 ESV Let my prayer be counted as incense before you, and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice!

Why would the LORD measure our worship?

- Mat 15:7-9 NIV You hypocrites! Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you: 8 "These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. 9 **They worship me in vain;** their teachings are merely human rules."
- Joh 4:23-24 NIV Yet a time is coming and has now come when the **true worshipers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth,** for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. 24 God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth."
- Rom 12:1 NIV Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to **offer your bodies** as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God--**this is your true and proper worship.**
- 1Ti 2:9-10 NIV I also want the women to dress modestly, with decency and propriety, adorning themselves, not with elaborate hairstyles or gold or pearls or expensive clothes, 10 but with good deeds, **appropriate for women who profess to worship God.**

“With its Worshipers” - why would the LORD measure the worshippers?

- 2Co 10:12 NIV We do not dare to classify or compare ourselves with some who commend themselves. When **they measure themselves by themselves** and compare themselves with themselves, they are not wise.
- Eph 4:11-13 NIV So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, 12 to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up 13 until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, **attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.**
- 1Pe 4:17-19 NIV **For it is time for judgment to begin with God's household;** and if it begins with us, what will the outcome be for those who do not obey the gospel of God? 18 And, "If it is hard for the righteous to be saved, what will become of the ungodly and the sinner?" 19 So then, those who suffer according to God's will should commit themselves to their faithful Creator and continue to do good.

2 But exclude the outer court; do not measure it, because it has been given to the Gentiles. They will trample on the holy city for 42 months.

Exclude the outer court...it has been given to the Gentiles

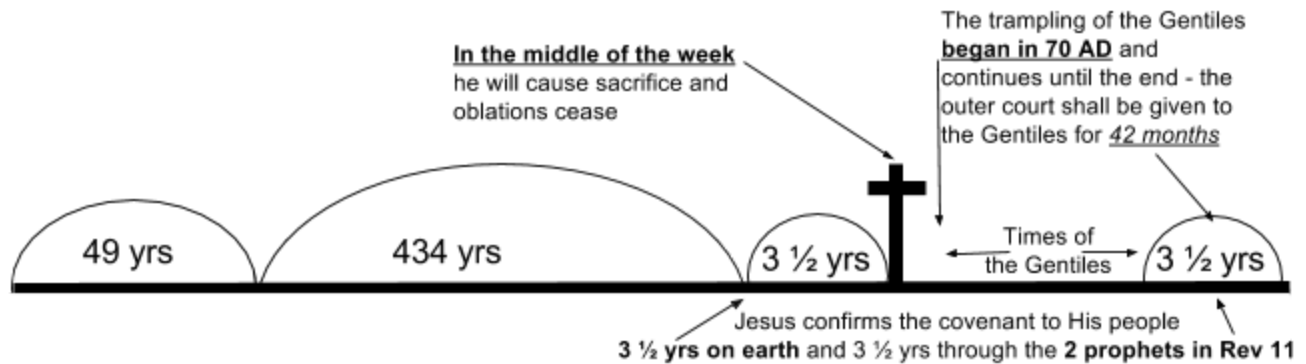
As we learned in Daniel's 70 weeks there is a 7 year period where the LORD is confirming His covenant with His people. 3 ½ of those years took place during the years of Jesus' ministry...and just before the second coming of Christ the second half of the week will take place.

They will trample on the holy city for 42 months

I think there exists this **“Times of the Gentiles”** gap between the two halves of the last week. The Gentiles are said to be trampling the holy city for 42 months or 3 ½ years. Obviously the Gentiles

trampled the holy city in 70 AD...and that "trampling" continues to this day until it will be finished at the end of the 3 ½ years before the return of Christ.

- Luk 21:24 NIV They will fall by the sword and will be taken as prisoners to all the nations. **Jerusalem will be trampled on by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.**



Not sure if this measuring the temple, the altar and the worshippers and excluding the outer court is an attempt at drawing a distinction among the true worshippers of God. It seems like at some point a distinction is made.

- Heb 3:5-6 ESV Now Moses was faithful in all God's house as a servant, to testify to the things that were to be spoken later, 6 but Christ is faithful over God's house as a son. And **we are his house *IF INDEED WE HOLD FAST*** our confidence and our boasting in our hope.

There is an emphasis on purity as a person anticipates the second coming of Christ

- 1Jn 3:1-3 ESV See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him. 2 Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is. 3 **And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure.**

See for example the parables of Jesus in Matt 24 and 25

Mat 24:37-41 ESV For as were the days of Noah, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. 38 For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day when Noah entered the ark, 39 and **they were unaware until the flood came and swept them all away**, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. 40 Then two men will be in the field; one will be taken and one left. 41 Two women will be grinding at the mill; one will be taken and one left.

- **In the flood, who was taken and who was left?**

Mat 24:44-50 ESV Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect. 45 "Who then is the faithful and wise servant, whom his master has set over his household, to give them their food at the proper time? 46 **Blessed is that servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes.** 47 Truly, I say to you, he will set him over all his possessions. 48 But if that **wicked servant** says to himself, '**My master is delayed,**' 49 and begins

to beat his fellow servants and eats and drinks with drunkards, 50 the master of that servant will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he does not know

Mat 25:1-2 ESV "Then the kingdom of heaven will be like **ten virgins** who took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. 2 **Five of them were foolish, and five were wise.**

...Mat 25:11-12 ESV Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, 'Lord, lord, open to us.' 12 But he answered, 'Truly, I say to you, I do not know you.'

- Mat 7:21-24 ESV "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. 22 On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?' 23 And then will I declare to them, '**I never knew you**; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.' 24 "Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock.
- 2Ti 2:19 ESV But God's firm foundation stands, bearing this seal: "**The Lord knows those who are his**," and, "Let everyone who **names the name of the Lord depart from iniquity.**"

Mat 25:14-15 ESV "For it will be like a man going on a journey, who **called his servants and entrusted to them his property.** 15 To one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away.

...Mat 25:30 ESV And cast the worthless servant into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

Mat 25:32 ESV Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats.

NOTE: *Obviously some of these scriptures are speaking of saved and unsaved (such as the sheep and the goats) but a strong case can be made that the verbiage of servants and virgins is talking about Christians.*

The two witnesses

3 And I will appoint **my two witnesses**, and they will prophesy for **1,260 days**, clothed in sackcloth." 4 They are "the two olive trees" and the two lampstands, and "they stand before the Lord of the earth."

'My two witnesses' - prophesied

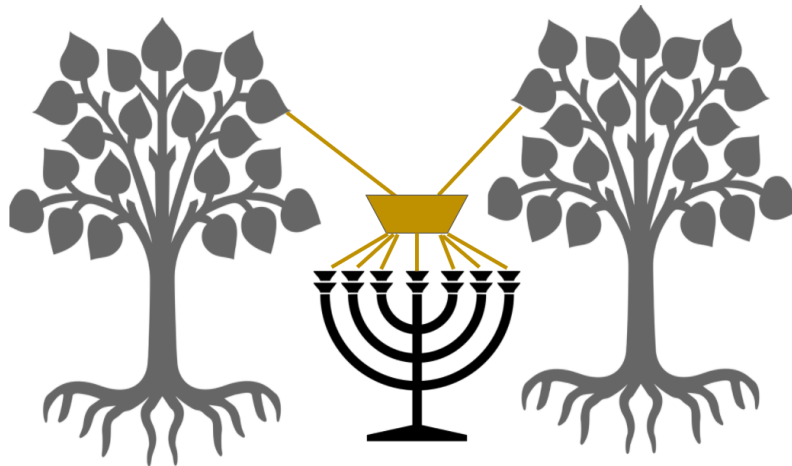
The LORD appointed them to prophesy for 1,260 days (the same 3 ½ year period)

They are "the two olive trees" and "they stand before the LORD of the earth".

- **This is a reference to** -- Zec 4:1-6 NIV Then the angel who talked with me returned and woke me up, like someone awakened from sleep. 2 He asked me, "What do you see?" I answered, "I see a solid **gold lampstand** with a bowl at the top and seven lamps on it, with seven channels to the lamps. 3 Also there are **two olive trees by it**, one on the right of the

bowl and the other on its left." 4 I asked the angel who talked with me, "What are these, my lord?" 5 He answered, "Do you not know what these are?" "No, my lord," I replied. 6 So he said to me, "This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel: 'Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit,' says the LORD Almighty.

- Zec 4:11-14 KJV 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?** 12 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?** 13 And he answered me and said, Knowest thou not what these be? And I said, No, my lord. 14 Then said he, **These are the two anointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth.**



Identifying the two witnesses

5 If anyone tries to harm them, **fire comes from their mouths and devours their enemies.** This is how anyone who wants to harm them must die. 6 They have **power to shut up the heavens so that it will not rain** during the time they are prophesying; and they have power to **turn the waters into blood** and to **strike the earth with every kind of plague** as often as they want.

The description of what these two witnesses do provides clues as to who they are:

They prophesy for 3 ½ years

Fire devours their enemies

- **ELIJAH** - 2Ki 1:9-10 ESV Then the king sent to him a captain of fifty men with his fifty. He went up to Elijah, who was sitting on the top of a hill, and said to him, "O man of God, the king says, 'Come down.'" 10 But Elijah answered the captain of fifty, "**If I am a man of God, let fire come down from heaven and consume you and your fifty.**" Then fire came down from heaven and consumed him and his fifty.
- **MOSES** - Num 16:35 ESV And **fire came out from the LORD** and consumed the 250 men offering the incense. [*When Korah rebelled against Moses*]

They shut up the sky so it will not rain [for 3 ½ years - or the length of time of their ministry]

- **ELIJAH** - Jas 5:17-18 ESV Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and **he prayed fervently that it might not rain, and for three years and six months it did not rain on the earth.** 18 Then he prayed again, and heaven gave rain, and the earth bore its fruit.
- **MOSES** - Exo 9:33-34 ESV So Moses went out of the city from Pharaoh and stretched out his hands to the LORD, and the thunder and the hail ceased, and the rain no longer poured upon the earth. 34 But when Pharaoh saw that the rain and the hail and the thunder had ceased, he sinned yet again and hardened his heart, he and his servants.

They turn the waters to blood

- **MOSES** - Exo 7:19-20 ESV And the LORD said to Moses, "Say to Aaron, 'Take your staff and stretch out your hand over the waters of Egypt, over their rivers, their canals, and their ponds, and all their pools of water, so that they may become blood, and there shall be blood throughout all the land of Egypt, even in vessels of wood and in vessels of stone.'" 20 Moses and Aaron did as the LORD commanded. In the sight of Pharaoh and in the sight of his servants he lifted up the staff and struck the water in the Nile, and all the water in the Nile turned into blood.

They strike the earth with plagues

- **MOSES** - Exo 11:1 ESV The LORD said to Moses, "**Yet one plague more** I will bring upon Pharaoh and upon Egypt. Afterward he will let you go from here. When he lets you go, he will drive you away completely.

Moses and Elijah were the last two prophets mentioned in the OT

- Mal 4:4-6 ESV "**Remember the law of my servant Moses**, the statutes and rules that I commanded him at Horeb for all Israel. 5 "**Behold, I will send you Elijah** the prophet before the great and awesome day of the LORD comes. 6 And he will turn the hearts of fathers to their children and the hearts of children to their fathers, lest I come and strike the land with a decree of utter destruction."

Moses and Elijah (representing the Law and the prophets) appeared with Jesus on the mountain of transfiguration - we are told to listen to Jesus

- Luk 9:29-35 ESV And as he was praying, the appearance of his face was altered, and his clothing became dazzling white. 30 And behold, **two men were talking with him, Moses and Elijah**, 31 who appeared in glory and spoke of his departure, which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. 32 Now Peter and those who were with him were heavy with sleep, but when they became fully awake they saw his glory and the two men who stood with him. 33 And as the men were parting from him, Peter said to Jesus, "Master, it is good that we are here. Let us make three tents, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah"--not knowing what he said. 34 As he was saying these things, a cloud came and overshadowed them, and they were afraid as they entered the cloud. 35 And a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "**This is my Son, my Chosen One; listen to him!**"

Jesus has spoken

- Heb 1:1-2 ESV Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, 2 **but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son**, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world.

The two witnesses killed and resurrected

7 Now when they have finished their testimony, the beast that comes up from the Abyss will attack them, and overpower and kill them. 8 Their bodies will lie in the public square of **the great city--which is figuratively called Sodom and Egypt--where also their Lord was crucified**. 9 For three and a half days some from **every people, tribe, language and nation** will gaze on their bodies and refuse them burial. 10 **The inhabitants of the earth** will gloat over them and will celebrate by sending each other gifts, because these two prophets had tormented those who live on the earth. 11 But after the three and a half days the breath of life from God entered them, and they stood on their feet, and terror struck those who saw them.

Now when they finished their testimony - the beast kills them

- The inhabitants of the earth seemed to be familiar with their ministry
- Their ministry took place in Jerusalem - here figuratively called Sodom and Egypt
- I think this represents the last half of the week from Daniel's 70 weeks - **"He will confirm the covenant for many for 1 week"** - the first half took place during the ministry of Jesus, the last half takes place in Jerusalem by two of the most powerful prophets of Israel's history representing the Law and the Prophets. They are also those who appeared with Jesus on the mount and spoke with Him about his departure. Who better to confirm the covenant than those who represent a huge portion of what OT Israel is about, and two who intimately have experienced the person of Jesus Christ in his death and resurrection.

This is another reason **Elijah and Moses could be these two witnesses**

- **Elijah never died** - 2Ki 2:11 ESV And as they still went on and talked, behold, chariots of fire and horses of fire separated the two of them. And Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.
- **There is a question about the body of Moses** - Jud 1:9 ESV But when the archangel Michael, contending with the devil, was disputing about the body of Moses, he did not presume to pronounce a blasphemous judgment, but said, "The Lord rebuke you."
- Deu 34:5-6 ESV So Moses the servant of the LORD died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the LORD, 6 and he buried him in the valley in the land of Moab opposite Beth-peor; but no one knows the place of his burial to this day.
- **Some also consider Enoch as a possibility of being one of these prophets** - Gen 5:24 ESV Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him.

The resurrection of the two witnesses

12 Then they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, "Come up here." And they went up to heaven in a cloud, while their enemies looked on. 13 At that very hour there was a severe earthquake and a tenth of the city collapsed. Seven thousand people were killed in the earthquake, and the survivors were terrified and gave glory to the God of heaven.

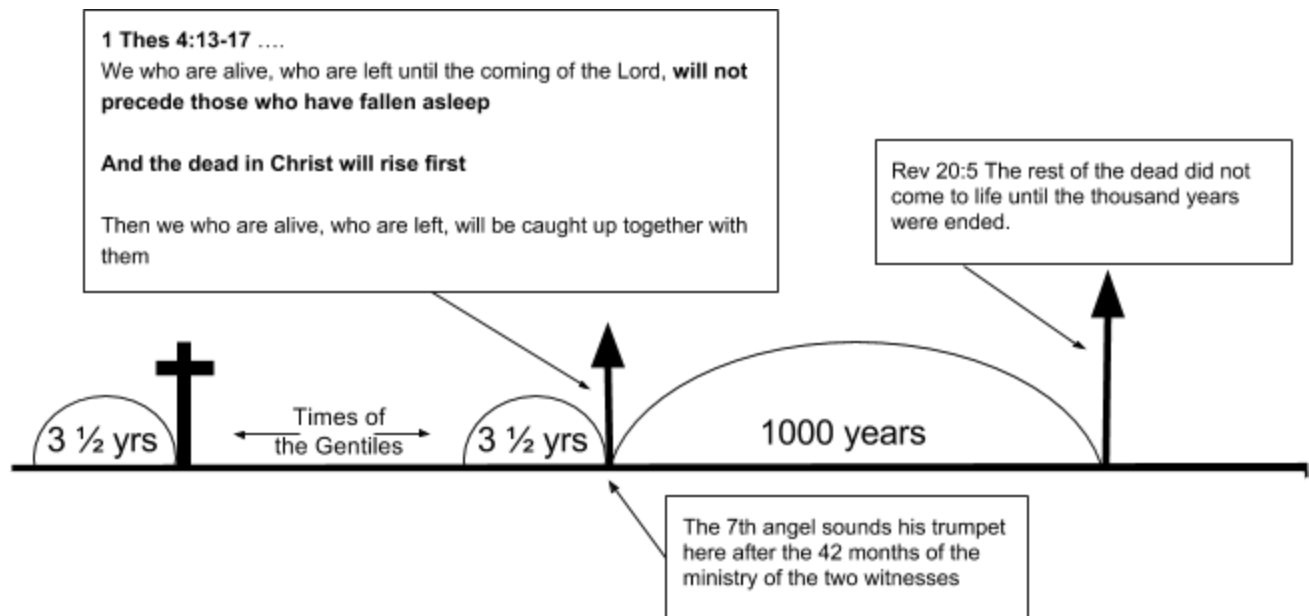
The third woe is coming

14 The second woe has passed; the third woe is coming soon. 15 **The seventh angel sounded his trumpet**, and there were loud voices in heaven, which said: "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Messiah, and he will reign for ever and ever."

The seventh angel sounded his trumpet

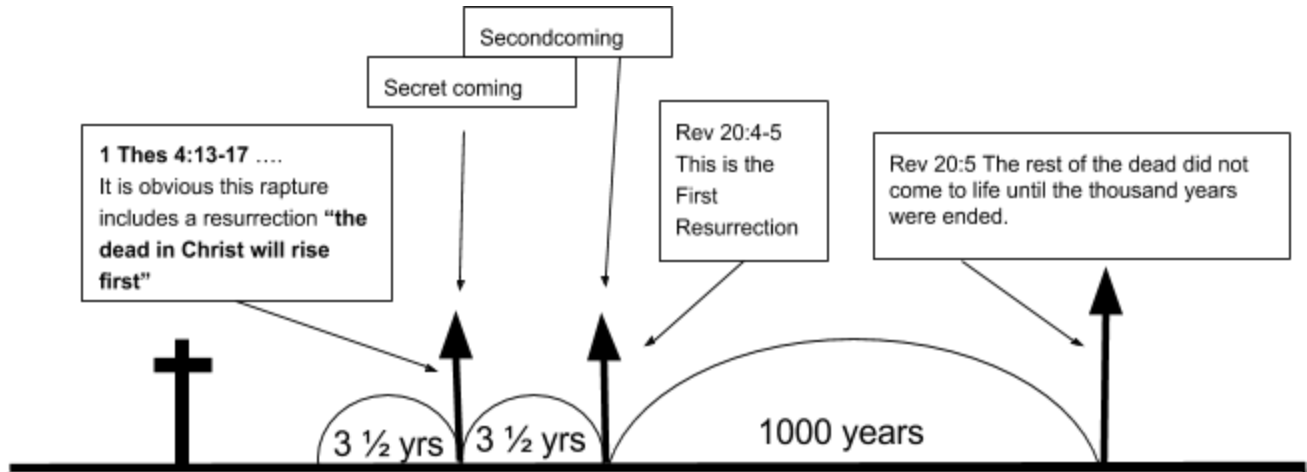
- Mat 24:27-31 ESV For as the lightning comes from the east and shines as far as the west, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. 28 Wherever the corpse is, there the vultures will gather. 29 "Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. 30 Then will appear in heaven the sign of the Son of Man, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. 31 **And he will send out his angels with a loud trumpet call**, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.
- 1Co 15:51-54 ESV Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, 52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, **at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound**, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. 53 For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality. 54 When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory."
- 1Th 4:13-17 ESV But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. 14 For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep. 15 For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that **we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep**. 16 For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. **And the dead in Christ will rise first**. 17 Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord.
- Rev 20:4-5 ESV Then I saw thrones, and seated on them were those to whom the authority to judge was committed. Also I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus and for the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or its image and

had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. 5 The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended. This is the first resurrection.



Some basic reasons I do not hold to the rapture as typically taught

- Based on what I shared regarding Daniel's 70th week (only 3 ½ years remain)
- Scripture describe two NOT THREE resurrections...
 - Dan 12:2-3 ESV And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, **some to everlasting life**, and **some to shame and everlasting contempt**. 3 And those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the sky above; and those who turn many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever.
 - Joh 5:28-29 ESV Do not marvel at this, for an hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice 29 and come out, those who have done good to the **resurrection of life**, and those who have done evil to the **resurrection of judgment**.
 - Act 24:14-15 ESV But this I confess to you, that according to the Way, which they call a sect, I worship the God of our fathers, believing everything laid down by the Law and written in the Prophets, 15 having a hope in God, which these men themselves accept, that there will be a **resurrection of both the just and the unjust**.
- **Here is where the three resurrections would fall**
 - FIRST 1 Thes 4:13-17 - "the dead in Christ will rise first"
 - SECOND at the beginning of the millennium (Rev 20:4-5)
 - THIRD after the 1000 years (Rev 20:4-5)



Rev 20:4-5 ESV Then I saw thrones, and seated on them were those to whom the authority to judge was committed. Also I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus and for the word of God, and **those who had not worshiped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.** 5 The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended. This is the first resurrection.

So those who hold to dispensational premillennialism and a pre-tribulation rapture speak of a secret coming of Christ FOR the saints “in the air” and a second coming of Christ WITH his saints to destroy the antichrist.

Here is the reasoning of one who holds to the pre-tribulation rapture theory

Why is it important to keep the rapture and the second coming distinct?

1) If the rapture and the second coming are the same event, believers will have to go through the tribulation (1 Thessalonians 5:9; Revelation 3:10).

My comment: God never promises to keep us from tribulation - we are however protected from the wrath of God.

2) If the rapture and the second coming are the same event, **the return of Christ is not imminent**—there are many things which must occur before He can return (Matthew 24:4-30).

My comment: I think there are things that still must be completed before He can return (the revelation of antichrist, a great falling away, the gospel preached to all nations

Mat 24:14 ESV And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, **and then the end will come.**

2Th 2:3 ESV Let no one deceive you in any way. For that day will not come, unless the rebellion comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction,

3) In describing the tribulation period, **Revelation chapters 6–19 nowhere mentions the church.** During the tribulation—also called “the time of trouble for Jacob” (Jeremiah 30:7)—God will again turn His primary attention to Israel (Romans 11:17-31).

My comment: You cannot build a doctrine from silence - we are looking for what the bible says, not what it is silent about.

He continues: The rapture and second coming are similar but separate events. Both involve Jesus returning. Both are end-times events. However, it is crucially important to recognize the differences. In summary, the rapture is the return of Christ in the clouds to remove all believers from the earth before the time of God’s wrath. The second coming is the return of Christ to the earth to bring the tribulation to an end and to defeat the Antichrist and his evil world empire.¹

Now there is coming the time for judgment and reward

16 And the twenty-four elders, who were seated on their thrones before God, fell on their faces and worshiped God, 17 saying: "We give thanks to you, Lord God Almighty, the One who is and who was, because you have taken your great power and have begun to reign. 18 The nations were angry, and your wrath has come. **The time has come for judging the dead, and for rewarding your servants the prophets and your people who revere your name, both great and small--** and for destroying those who destroy the earth." 19 Then God's temple in heaven was opened, and within his temple was seen the ark of his covenant. And there came flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder, an earthquake and a severe hailstorm.

- 2Th 1:6-12 ESV since indeed God considers it just to repay with affliction those who afflict you, 7 and to grant relief to you who are afflicted as well as to us, **when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels** 8 in flaming fire, **inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus.** 9 They will **suffer the punishment of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord** and from the glory of his might, 10 when he comes on that day to be **glorified in his saints**, and to be marveled at among all who have believed, because our testimony to you was believed.

¹ <https://www.gotquestions.org/difference-Rapture-Second-Coming.html>