

The Encouragement to Remain Faithful: The Power of the Two Witnesses

Revelation 11

Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name. John 20:30-31

Seven Witnesses in Gospel of John

- 1. FATHER:** But the testimony that I have is greater than that of John. For the works that the Father has given me to accomplish, the very works that I am doing, bear witness about me that the Father has sent me. And the Father who sent me has himself borne witness about me. His voice you have never heard, his form you have never seen, and you do not have his word abiding in you, for you do not believe the one whom he has sent. John 5:36-38
- 2. SON:** "I can do nothing on my own. As I hear, I judge, and my judgment is just, because I seek not my own will but the will of him who sent me. If I alone bear witness about myself, my testimony is not true. There is another who bears witness about me, and I know that the testimony that he bears about me is true. John 5:31
- 3. HOLY SPIRIT:** "But when the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness about me. And you also will bear witness, because you have been with me from the beginning. John 15:26
- 4. JOHN BAPTIST:** There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him. He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light. John 1:6,7
- 5. JOHN APOSTLE:** This is the disciple who is bearing witness about these things, and who has written these things, and we know that his testimony is true. John 21:24
- 6. MIRACLES:** But the testimony that I have is greater than that of John. For the works that the Father has given me to accomplish, the very works that I am doing, bear witness about me that the Father has sent me. John 5:36
- 7. SCRIPTURES:** You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me, yet you refuse to come to me that you may have life. John 5:39 For if you believed Moses, you would believe me; for he wrote of me. 47 But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe my words?" (John 5:47)

INTRODUCTION: The Cost and the Need to Follow Christ

First Trumpet:	Hail, Fire, Blood	One Third of earth and trees burned; grass burned
Second Trumpet:	Fire into the Seas	One Third of seas become blood, living creatures die, ships destroyed
Third Trumpet:	Blazing star from heaven	One Third of waters become bitter; many people die
Fourth Trumpet:	Sun, Moon, Stars darkened	One Third of sun, moon, and stars darkened
Fifth Trumpet:	Locusts from the abyss	People without God's seal tormented for five months
Sixth Trumpet:	Fire, Smoke, Sulfur	One third of humans killed

The Encouragement to Follow Faithfully: The Power of the Two Witnesses

1. The Authority of Two Witnesses

Then I was given a measuring rod like a staff, and I was told,

1. "Rise and
2. measure the temple of God and
3. the altar and
4. those who worship there,
5. but do not measure the court outside the temple; leave that out, for it is given over to the nations, and they will trample the holy city for forty-two months.
6. And I will grant authority to my two witnesses, and
7. they will prophesy for 1,260 days, clothed in sackcloth."

Assurance of God's Covenant of Promise: Foreshadows the Measuring of the Temple

"Therefore thus says the Lord GOD:

1. Now I will restore the fortunes of Jacob and have mercy on the whole house of Israel, and
2. I will be jealous for my holy name.
3. They shall forget their shame and all the treachery they have practiced against me, when they dwell securely in their land with none to make them afraid, when I have brought them back from the peoples and gathered them from their enemies' lands, and through them have vindicated my holiness in the sight of many nations.
4. Then they shall know that I am the LORD their God, because I sent them into exile among the nations and then assembled them into their own land.
5. I will leave none of them remaining among the nations anymore.
6. And I will not hide my face anymore from them,
7. when I pour out my Spirit upon the house of Israel, declares the Lord GOD." (Ezekiel 39:25-29)

Call to Measure the Temple

1. In the twenty-fifth year of our exile, at the beginning of the year, on the tenth day of the month, in the fourteenth year after the city was struck down, on that very day, the hand of the LORD was upon me, and **he brought me to the city.**
2. In visions of God he brought me to **the land of Israel**, and set me down on a **very high mountain**, on which was a structure like a **city to the south.**
3. When he brought me there, behold, there was a man whose appearance was like bronze, **with a linen cord and a measuring reed in his hand.**
4. And he was standing in the gateway.
5. And the man said to me, "Son of man, **look with your eyes, and hear with your ears, and set your heart** upon all that I shall show you, for you were brought here in order that I might show it to you.
6. **Declare all that you see** to the house of Israel." (Ezekiel 40:1-4)

Jesus "Measuring" the Temple: The First Miracle at a Wedding and the Cleansing of the Table

FIRST MIRACLE: WATER INTO WINE: This, the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested his glory. And his disciples believed in him. (John 2:11)

CLEANSING THE TEMPLE: The Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. In the temple he found those who were selling oxen and sheep and pigeons, and the money-changers sitting there. And making a whip of cords, he drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and oxen. And he poured out the coins of the money-changers and overturned their tables. And he told those who sold the pigeons, "Take these things away; do not make my Father's house a house of trade." His disciples remembered that it was written, "Zeal for your house will consume me." So the Jews said to him, "What sign do you show us for doing these things?"

Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."

The Jews then said, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will you raise it up in three days?"

But he was speaking about the temple of his body.

When therefore he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this, and they believed the Scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken.

BELIEF IN JESUS: Now when he was in Jerusalem at the Passover Feast, **many believed in his name when they saw the signs that he was doing.**

WITNESS OF JESUS: But Jesus on his part did not entrust himself to them, because he knew all people and **needed no one to bear witness about man, for he himself knew what was in man.** (John 2:13-22)

2. Description of the Two Witnesses

These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands that stand before the Lord of the earth.

The Two Witnesses Foreshadowed in Zerubbabel—the King and Joshua—the High Priest

And the angel who talked with me came again and woke me, like a man who is awakened out of his sleep. And he said to me, "What do you see?" I said,

"I see, and behold, a **lampstand** all of gold, with a bowl on the top of it, and seven lamps on it, with seven lips on each of the lamps that are on the top of it.

And there are **two olive trees** by it, one on the right of the bowl and the other on its left."

And I said to the angel who talked with me, "What are these, my lord?"

Then the angel who talked with me answered and said to me, "Do you not know what these are?" I said, "No, my lord." Then 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 of hosts. Who are you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you shall become a plain. And he shall bring forward the top stone amid shouts of 'Grace, grace to it!'**"

Then the word of the LORD came to me, saying,

"The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house; his hands shall also complete it. Then you will know that the LORD of hosts has sent me to you. For whoever has despised the day of small things shall rejoice, and **shall see the plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel.**

"These seven are the eyes of the LORD, which range through the whole earth."

Then I said to him, "**What are these two olive trees on the right and the left of the lampstand?**"

And a second time I answered and said to him, "What are these two branches of the olive trees, which are beside the two golden pipes from which the golden oil is poured out?"

He said to me, "Do you not know what these are?" I said, "No, my lord."

Then he said, "**These are the two anointed ones who stand by the Lord of the whole earth.**" (Zechariah 4)

3. Protection of the Two Witnesses

And if anyone would harm them, fire pours from their mouth and consumes their foes.

If anyone would harm them, this is how he is doomed to be killed.

4. Power of the Two Witnesses

They have the power to shut the sky, that no rain may fall during the days of their prophesying, and they have power over the waters to turn them into blood and to strike the earth with every kind of plague, as often as they desire.

Two Witnesses Foreshadowed in Elijah—the Prophet and Moses—the Law Giver

ELIJAH AND FIRE: And at the time of the offering of the oblation, Elijah the prophet came near and said, **“O LORD, God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, let it be known this day that you are God in Israel, and that I am your servant, and that I have done all these things at your word.** Answer me, O LORD, answer me, that this people may know that you, O LORD, are God, and that you have turned their hearts back.”

Then the fire of the LORD fell and consumed the burnt offering and the wood and the stones and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench.

And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces and said, “The LORD, he is God; the LORD, he is God.” And Elijah said to them, “Seize the prophets of Baal; let not one of them escape.” And they seized them. And Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon and slaughtered them there. (I KINGS 18:36-40)

ELIJAH AND RAIN And Elijah said to Ahab, “Go up, eat and drink, for there is a sound of the rushing of rain.” So Ahab went up to eat and to drink. And Elijah went up to the top of Mount Carmel. And he bowed himself down on the earth and put his face between his knees. And he said to his servant, “Go up now, look toward the sea.” And he went up and looked and said, “There is nothing.” And he said, “Go again,” seven times.

And at the seventh time he said, “Behold, a little cloud like a man’s hand is rising from the sea.” And he said, “Go up, say to Ahab, ‘Prepare your chariot and go down, lest the rain stop you.’”

And in a little while the heavens grew black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain. And Ahab rode and went to Jezreel. And the hand of the LORD was on Elijah, and he gathered up his garment and ran before Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel. (I Kings 18:41-46)

MOSES AND BLOOD IN NILE: 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. And the fish in the Nile died, and the Nile stank, so that the Egyptians could not drink water from the Nile. There was blood throughout all the land of Egypt. But the magicians of Egypt did the same by their secret arts. So Pharaoh’s heart remained hardened, and he would not listen to them, as the LORD had said. Pharaoh turned and went into his house, and he did not take even this to heart. And all the Egyptians dug along the Nile for water to drink, for they could not drink the water of the Nile. **Seven full days passed after the LORD had struck the Nile.** (Exodus 7:20-25)

Two Witnesses Foreshadowed in the Mount of Transfiguration: God and Jesus in Elijah and Moses

TRIBULATION OF FOLLOWING JESUS: Now it happened that as he was praying alone, the disciples were with him. And he asked them, “Who do the crowds say that I am?” And they answered, “John the Baptist. But others say, Elijah, and others, that one of the prophets of old has risen.” Then he said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” And Peter answered, **“The Christ of God.”**

And he strictly charged and commanded them to tell this to no one, saying,

1. “The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised.”
2. And he said to all, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.
3. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it.
4. For what does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses or forfeits himself?
5. For whoever is ashamed of me and of my words, of him will the Son of Man be ashamed when he comes in his glory and the glory of the Father and of the holy angels.
6. But I tell you truly, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see the kingdom of God.”

ENCOURAGEMENT OF THE TWO WITNESSES: Now about eight days after these sayings he took with him Peter and John and James and went up on the mountain to pray. And as he was praying, the appearance of his face was altered, and his clothing became dazzling white. And behold, two men were talking with him, Moses and Elijah, who appeared in glory and spoke of his departure, which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. 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. 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.

As he was saying these things, a cloud came and overshadowed them, and they were afraid as they entered the cloud.

And a voice came out of the cloud, saying, “This is my Son, my Chosen One; listen to him!” And when the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. And they kept silent and told no one in those days anything of what they had seen. (Luke 9:28-36)

SOURCE OF THE TRIBULATION: On the next day, when they had come down from the mountain, a great crowd met him. And behold, a man from the crowd cried out, “Teacher, I beg you to look at my son, for he is my only child. And behold, a spirit seizes him, and he suddenly cries out. It convulses him so that he foams at the mouth, and shatters him, and will hardly leave him.

And I begged your disciples to cast it out, but they could not.”

Jesus answered, **“O faithless and twisted generation, how long am I to be with you and bear with you? Bring your son here.”**

While he was coming, the demon threw him to the ground and convulsed him. But Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit and healed the boy, and gave him back to his father. And all were astonished at the majesty of God.

5. Persecution of the Two Witnesses

And when they have finished their testimony, the beast that rises from the bottomless pit will make war on them and conquer them and kill them, and their dead bodies will lie in the street of the great city that symbolically is called Sodom and Egypt, where their Lord was crucified.

For three and a half days some from the peoples and tribes and languages and nations will gaze at their dead bodies and refuse to let them be placed in a tomb, and those who dwell on the earth will rejoice over them and make merry and exchange presents, because these two prophets had been a torment to those who dwell on the earth.

The Beast Conquering the Two Witnesses: Foreshadowed in Judas' Betrayal of Jesus

Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart out of this world to the Father, having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. During supper, **when the devil had already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him, Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going back to God,** rose from supper. He laid aside his outer garments, and taking a towel, tied it around his waist. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was wrapped around him. (John 13:1-5)

JESUS: After saying these things, Jesus was troubled in his spirit, and testified, "Truly, truly, I say to you, one of you will betray me." The disciples looked at one another, uncertain of whom he spoke.

JOHN: One of his disciples, whom Jesus loved, was reclining at table at Jesus' side, so Simon Peter motioned to him to ask Jesus of whom he was speaking. So that disciple, leaning back against Jesus, said to him, "Lord, who is it?"

JESUS: Jesus answered, "It is he to whom I will give this morsel of bread when I have dipped it." So when he had dipped the morsel, he gave it to Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot. Then after he had taken the morsel, **Satan entered into him.** Jesus said to him, "What you are going to do, do quickly."

Now no one at the table knew why he said this to him. Some thought that, because Judas had the moneybag, Jesus was telling him, "Buy what we need for the feast," or that he should give something to the poor. So, **after receiving the morsel of bread, he immediately went out. And it was night.** (John 13:21-29)

Hatred of the World for the Church

"If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.

Remember the word that I said to you: 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you. If they kept my word, they will also keep yours.

But all these things they will do to you on account of my name, because they do not know him who sent me. If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have been guilty of sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin. Whoever hates me hates my Father also. If I had not done among them the works that no one else did, they would not be guilty of sin, but now they have seen and hated both me and my Father. But the word that is written in their Law must be fulfilled: 'They hated me without a cause.' (John 15:18-25)

"But when the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness about me. And you also will bear witness, because you have been with me from the beginning." "I have said all these things to you to keep you from falling away. They will put you out of the synagogues. Indeed, the hour is coming when whoever kills you will think he is offering service to God. And they will do these things because they have not known the Father, nor me. But I have said these things to you, that when their hour comes you may remember that I told them to you. (John 15:26-16:4a)

6. Resurrection of the Two Witnesses

But after the three and a half days a breath of life from God entered them, and they stood up on their feet, and great fear fell on those who saw them.

Jesus' Resurrection and The Coming of the Holy Spirit

"These things I have spoken to you while I am still with you. But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.

You heard me say to you, 'I am going away, and I will come to you.' If you loved me, you would have rejoiced, because I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I.

And now I have told you before it takes place, so that when it does take place you may believe.

I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming. He has no claim on me, but I do as the Father has commanded me, so that the world may know that I love the Father. Rise, let us go from here. (John 14:25-31)

"I have manifested your name to the people whom you gave me out of the world. Yours they were, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. Now they know that everything that you have given me is from you. For I have given them the words that you gave me, and they have received them and have come to know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me. I am praying for them. I am not praying for the world but for those whom you have given me, for they are yours. All mine are yours, and yours are mine, and I am glorified in them.

And I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, keep them in your name, which you have given me, that they may be one, even as we are one. **While I was with them, I kept them in your name, which you have given me. I have guarded them, and not one of them has been lost except the son of destruction, that the Scripture might be fulfilled.**

But now I am coming to you, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves. I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.

I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one. They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. And for their sake I consecrate myself, that they also may be sanctified in truth. (John 17:6-18)

7. Ascension of the Two Witnesses

Then they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, "Come up here!" And they went up to heaven in a cloud, and their enemies watched them. And at that hour there was a great earthquake, and a tenth of the city fell. Seven thousand people were killed in the earthquake, and the rest were terrified and gave glory to the God of heaven.

The Heavenly Preparations of the Two Witnesses: Christ and the Father

“Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. In my Father’s house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also. And you know the way to where I am going.” Thomas said to him, “Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?” Jesus said to him, “**I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.** If you had known me, you would have known my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him.” (John 14:1-7)

Enoch: Ascends into Heaven

When Enoch had lived 65 years, he fathered Methuselah. Enoch walked with God after he fathered Methuselah 300 years and had other sons and daughters. Thus all the days of Enoch were 365 years. Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him. (Genesis 5:21-24)

Elijah: Ascends into Heaven

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. And Elisha saw it and he cried, “My father, my father! The chariots of Israel and its horsemen!” And he saw him no more. Then he took hold of his own clothes and tore them in two pieces. And he took up the cloak of Elijah that had fallen from him and went back and stood on the bank of the Jordan. Then he took the cloak of Elijah that had fallen from him and struck the water, saying, “Where is the LORD, the God of Elijah?” And when he had struck the water, the water was parted to the one side and to the other, and Elisha went over. (2 Kings 2:11-14)

Jesus: Ascends into Heaven

So when they had come together, they asked him, “Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?” He said to them, “It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by his own authority.

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”

And when he had said these things, as they were looking on, he was lifted up, and a **cloud took him out of their sight.**

And while they were gazing into heaven as he went, behold, **two men stood by them in white robes**, and said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? **This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.**” (ACTS 1:6-11)

The second woe has passed; behold, the third woe is soon to come.

Seventh Trumpet:

Then the seventh angel blew his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, “The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever.”

And the twenty-four elders who sit on their thrones before God fell on their faces and worshiped God, saying,

1. “We give thanks to you, Lord God Almighty, who is and who was,
2. for you have taken your great power and begun to reign.
3. The nations raged, but your wrath came, and the time for the dead to be judged,
4. and for rewarding your servants, the prophets and saints, and those who fear your name, both small and great,
5. and for destroying the destroyers of the earth.”

Church Filled with the Holy Spirit

When they were released, they went to their friends and reported what the chief priests and the elders had said to them. And when they heard it, they lifted their voices together to God and said,

“Sovereign Lord, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and everything in them, who through the mouth of our father David, your servant, said by the Holy Spirit,

“‘Why did the Gentiles rage, and the peoples plot in vain? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers were gathered together, against the Lord and against his Anointed’—

for truly in this city there were gathered together against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, to do whatever your hand and your plan had predestined to take place.

And now, Lord, look upon their threats and grant to your servants to continue to speak your word with all boldness, while you stretch out your hand to heal, and signs and wonders are performed through the name of your holy servant Jesus.”

And when they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and continued to speak the word of God with boldness. (Acts 4:23-31)

Then God's temple in heaven was opened, and the ark of his covenant was seen within his temple. There were flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder, an earthquake, and heavy hail.

For Christ has entered, not into holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true things, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf. Nor was it to offer himself repeatedly, as the high priest enters the holy places every year with blood not his own, for then he would have had to suffer repeatedly since the foundation of the world. But as it is, he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. And just as it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment, so Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, **will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him.** (Hebrews 9:24-28)