

Revelation 11:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed.

Analysis

The witnesses' power to consume enemies with fire from their mouths parallels Elijah's ministry (2 Kings 1:10-12) and Jeremiah's commission (Jeremiah 5:14). This represents the Word's power to judge and condemn—the gospel's two-edged nature (Hebrews 4:12). Reformed theology emphasizes that gospel proclamation both saves the elect and hardens the reprobate. The witnesses' supernatural protection during their testimony period demonstrates God's sovereignty over His messengers' timing. None can silence God's testimony until its appointed completion. The 'hurt' refers to premature silencing before their mission concludes.

Historical Context

First-century prophets faced violent opposition from both Jewish and Roman authorities. This vision encouraged believers that God's witnesses would complete their testimony despite threats. The Elijah imagery recalled Israel's prophetic tradition, asserting continuity between Old Testament prophets and Christian witnesses. The 1,260 days (v. 3) represents complete testimony before judgment.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. How does the promise of protection during testimony's appointed time encourage boldness in witness?
2. What does the Word's power to judge (fire from mouths) teach about the seriousness of gospel proclamation?

Interlinear Text

καὶ	εἴ	τις	αὐτὸν	θέλη	ἀδικῆσαι	πῦρ	ἐκπορεύεται	ἐκ
And	G1487	G5100	their	will	hurt	fire	proceedeth	out of
G2532			G846	G2309	G91	G4442	G1607	G1537
τοῦ	στόματος	αὐτὸν	καὶ	κατεσθίει	τοὺς	ἐχθροὺς	αὐτὸν	
G3588	mouth	their	And	devoureth	G3588	enemies	their	
	G4750	G846	G2532	G2719		G2190	G846	
καὶ	εἴ	τις	αὐτὸν	θέλη	ἀδικῆσαι	οὕτως	δεῖ	
And	G1487	G5100	their	will	hurt	in this manner	he must	
G2532			G846	G2309	G91	G3779	G1163	
αὐτὸν	ἀποκτανθῆναι							
their	be killed							
G846	G615							

Additional Cross-References

Jeremiah 5:14 (Parallel theme): Wherefore thus saith the LORD God of hosts, Because ye speak this word, behold, I will make my words in thy mouth fire, and this people wood, and it shall devour them.

Isaiah 11:4 (Parallel theme): But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked.

Hosea 6:5 (Parallel theme): Therefore have I hewed them by the prophets; I have slain them by the words of my mouth: and thy judgments are as the light that goeth forth.

Psalms 18:8 (Parallel theme): There went up a smoke out of his nostrils, and fire out of his mouth devoured: coals were kindled by it.

Jeremiah 1:10 (Parallel theme): See, I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant.

Zechariah 2:8 (Parallel theme): For thus saith the LORD of hosts; After the glory hath he sent me unto the nations which spoiled you: for he that toucheth you toucheth the apple of his eye.