

Revelation 11:6

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will.

Analysis

The witnesses' powers parallel Moses (turning water to blood, Exodus 7:19) and Elijah (shutting heaven from rain, 1 Kings 17:1), identifying them as prophet-figures representing the church's testimony. Power to 'smite the earth with all plagues' demonstrates their authority in declaring God's judgments. Reformed theology sees the church as prophetic witness, proclaiming both salvation and judgment. The accumulation of these powers emphasizes the witnesses' complete authority during their testimony period. Their ministry combines Law (Moses) and Prophets (Elijah), pointing to Christ's fulfillment of both.

Historical Context

Moses and Elijah appeared with Christ at the Transfiguration (Matthew 17:3), representing Law and Prophets testifying to Him. First-century Jewish expectation anticipated their return before Messiah. This vision asserts the church continues their prophetic function—testifying to Christ and pronouncing judgment on rejection. The plagues recall Egypt's judgment, warning of similar consequences for gospel rejection.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. How does the church today continue the prophetic ministry of declaring both God's invitation and warning?
2. What does the combination of Moses and Elijah's powers teach about the unity of Law and Prophets in testifying to Christ?

Interlinear Text

οὗτοι ἔχουσιν ἐξουσίαν κλεῖσαι τὸν οὐρανόν ἵνα μὴ

These have power to shut heaven G2443 G3361
G3778 G2192 G1849 G2808 G3588 G3772

βρέχη οὐετὸς ἐν ἡμέραις αὐτὰ τῆς προφητείας καὶ

it rain in the days of their prophecy and G2532
G1026 G5205 G1722 G2250 G846 G3588 G4394

ἐξουσίαν ἔχουσιν ἐπὶ τῶν ὑδάτων στρέφειν αὐτὰ εἰς

power have over waters to turn of their to G1519
G1849 G2192 G1909 G3588 G5204 G4762 G846

αἷμα καὶ πατάξαι τὴν γῆν πάσῃ πληγὴ ὁσάκις ἐὰν

blood and to smite the earth with all plagues as often as G1437
G129 G2532 G3960 G3588 G1093 G3956 G4127 G3740

θελήσωσιν

they will

G2309

Additional Cross-References

Luke 4:25 (Parallel theme): But I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land;

1 Kings 17:1 (Parallel theme): And Elijah the Tishbite, who was of the inhabitants of Gilead, said unto Ahab, As the LORD God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word.

1 Samuel 4:8 (Parallel theme): Woe unto us! who shall deliver us out of the hand of these mighty Gods? these are the Gods that smote the Egyptians with all the plagues in the wilderness.

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