

The Two Witnesses

Two powerful prophets testify for 1,260 days, performing signs and wonders. They are killed by the beast, but after three and a half days, God raises them to life.

Revelation 11:1-14

CHARACTERS: The two witnesses, The beast, God

THEMES: Faithful witness, Persecution, Resurrection power, God's vindication

JOHN WAS GIVEN a measuring rod and told to measure the temple of God and the altar and those who worship there, but not the outer court, which was given over to the nations to trample for forty-two months.

During this time, God said He would grant authority to His two witnesses, and they would prophesy for 1,260 days, clothed in sackcloth—the traditional garb of prophets. These two witnesses were described as the two olive trees and the two lampstands that stand before the Lord of the earth. If anyone tried to harm them, fire would pour from their mouths and consume their foes. They had power to shut the sky so that no rain would fall, to turn waters into blood, and to strike the earth with every kind of plague as often as they desired.

For three and a half years they prophesied, calling the world to repentance, confronting the powers of darkness with the truth of God. The inhabitants of the earth, loving their sin, hated them. But no one could silence them—until their testimony was complete.

When they finished their testimony, the beast that rises from the bottomless pit made war on them, conquered them, and killed them. Their dead bodies lay in the street of the great city—symbolically called Sodom and Egypt, where their Lord was crucified. For three and a half days,

people from every nation gazed at their dead bodies and refused them burial. The inhabitants of the earth rejoiced over them, celebrating and exchanging presents, because these two prophets had tormented those who dwell on the earth.

But after the three and a half days, a breath of life from God entered them. They stood up on their feet, and great fear fell on those who saw them. Then a loud voice from heaven called, 'Come up here!' And they went up to heaven in a cloud while their enemies watched.

At that moment, a great earthquake struck, and a tenth of the city fell. Seven thousand people were killed, and the rest were terrified and gave glory to the God of heaven.

The two witnesses represented the church's testimony during times of persecution—seemingly defeated, apparently overcome, but ultimately vindicated by the God who raises the dead. Their resurrection was a preview of the final resurrection, when all God's faithful witnesses would be raised and rewarded.