

THROUGH THE BIBLE REVELATION 9-11

This past Wednesday the high temperature in Yakutsk, Russia was -6 degrees F - and it snowed. The low dipped down to a chilly 24 degrees below zero.

Whereas in Cozumel, Mexico the low temp was a pleasant 64 - and the high, under sunny skies, was 83.

I'd said there was quite a contrast weather-wise between Cozumel and Yakutsk this past Wednesday.

But that's nothing compared to the contrast that will exist between Heaven and Earth during the final seven years prior to the return of Jesus to planet Earth...

In Revelation 4 the angels in heaven cry, "holy, holy, holy." At the end of chapter 8 angels on earth cry, "woe, woe, woe." The atmosphere in heaven is dominated by warm praises and a sunny future - whereas, on Earth the storm and cold of God's fury rages. The fifth angel picks up his trumpet and sounds another judgment...

Chapter 9 begins, "Then the fifth angel sounded: And I saw a star fallen from heaven to the earth." In chapter 8 we saw "stars" or "celestial bodies" - meteorites and asteroids - fall to Earth. This is a different kind of star.

Notice the next line... "To him was given the key to the bottomless pit." This "star" is a "him" not an "it."

This is not a "falling projectile," but a "fallen person."

And *from what he holds and by what he does*, “*he*” seems to be an angel. We know from Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 28 that before Satan sinned he was an angel.

Jesus told His disciples in Luke 10, “I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven.” We also know that Satan led a third of the angels into rebellion. It seems this fallen angel is a demon, or perhaps Satan himself.

“*And he opened the bottomless pit, and smoke arose out of the pit like the smoke of a great furnace. So the sun and the air were darkened because of the smoke of the pit.*” This “*fallen star*” lifts the lid on hell and a flume of hot smoke, laced with fiery embers, billows up.

Apparently, in Hell you don’t get a choice. There isn’t a “*non-smoking section.*” It’s “*smoking*” for everybody.

And this angel has the key to “*the bottomless pit.*”

This is the place of eternal torment that Jesus spoke of in Luke 16 in His story of Lazarus and the rich man.

Lazarus died and was comforted in paradise. The rich man died and went to the place of flame and thirst.

Here the demon unlocks the pit of torment... “*where their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched.*” And it’s like opening up a Pandora’s box full of evil...

Verse 3, “*Then out of the smoke locusts came upon the earth. And to them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power. They were commanded not to harm the grass of the earth, or any green thing, or any tree, but only those men who*

do not have the seal of God on their foreheads...” Or the 144,000 Jewish witnesses we saw in Revelation 7.

Here John sees “*locusts*” swarming onto the Earth. But these are not your run-of-the-mill locust. As we’ll see in the next verses certain traits distinguish them...

First, normal locust eat their veggies. They’ll strip a field bare. But these guys lay off the greens, and feed on men... **Second**, these locust aren’t stifled by smoke. Whereas you contain a normal swarm by fire...

Third, these locust are intelligent and spiritually aware. They know who God has sealed... **Fourth**, unlike a typical locust, these have stingers in their tails.

And **Fifth**, according to Proverbs 30:27, “*The locusts have no king, yet they all advance in ranks...*” Yet read ahead, verse 11, and these locust clearly have a King.

These locusts will *bug* the entire human race!

Verse 5 says of these creatures, “*And they were not given authority to kill them, but to torment them for five months. Their torment was like the torment of a scorpion when it strikes a man.*” Some Bible teachers believe these locust were the demons who sinned in Noah’s day. Genesis suggests they polluted the human gene pool by having sex with the daughters of men.

This perversion was so rampant God had to wipe out all of humanity, and start over with the family of Noah.

Jude refers to these demons as “*the angels who did not keep their proper domain...*” They crossed forbidden boundaries. These were hard-core felons.

And God had to lock them up in maximum security. 2 Peter 2:4-5 tell us, “God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast them down to hell and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment...”

Yet here as the 5th trumpet blows God unleashes these demons for five months - *not to kill but “torment.”*

It’s interesting, the floodwaters in Noah’s day covered the Earth for five months. This plague of locust lasts the same duration. In these five months men will learn what they should’ve learned after the flood.

Here a pack of perverted demons driven by lust are let loose to do what they did before the flood. They’ve been in lock-down for 4000 years, as their hatred for God and man has been brewing and seething.

Imagine, releasing every death row inmate in the world - the vilest of criminals - men with no conscience and with nothing to lose... They would still look like a pack of Boy Scouts compared to this devilish gang.

This is why it’s naive to talk glibly about enduring the Great Tribulation. This will be a horrific time in history.

People will fear going to bed at night.

So what if you go into survivalist mode - you hoard food, and stockpile weapons, and install a security system - *how do you protect against demons?*

It reminds me of the guy who jumped into a cab.

After a while he tapped the driver on the shoulder to give him directions. But as soon as the driver felt the hand he lost control - the cabby swerved off the road.

The passenger apologized. But the driver explained, "This is my first day on the job in a cab. For the last 20 years I've worked for a funeral home driving a hearse."

It'll also be unnerving and frightening when these hellish goons tap mankind on its collective shoulder.

Verse 6, "In those days men will seek death and will not find it; they will desire to die, and death will flee from them." These demons will see to it that life is worse than death. Attempted suicides will sky-rocket.

Folks will want to die, but *death takes a holiday!*

People will blow their brains out, yet refuse to die. They'll walk around like Zombies - with self-inflicted wounds. The Zombie Apocalypse will become a reality.

John describes these awful demons in verse 7...

"The shape of the locusts was like horses prepared for battle. On their heads were crowns of something like gold, and their faces were like the faces of men.

They had hair like women's hair, and their teeth were like lions' teeth. And they had breastplates like breastplates of iron, and the sound of their wings was like the sound of chariots with many horses running into battle. They had tails like scorpions, and there were stings in their tails. Their power was to hurt men five months." The Renaissance concept of gargoyles and centaurs aren't far off from John's description...

These demons are predators dressed for combat. Their chief purpose is to hurt men for five months.

And let me ask you a serious question - ever say to another person... “Go to Hell...” or “To Hell with that guy...” *After Chapter 9 you’ll want to take it back...*

Hell, and its belching smoke, and its locust torturers are nothing trivial. God’s judgment is serious business.

Of course, you might not have been so profane. You may’ve just prayed, “Lord, give him what he deserves.”

But with each trumpet blast you should think again...

Even the hardest prosecutors - the tough-on-crime bunch - seldom have the stomach for judgments this stern. *We like to talk about justice*, but when we see what justice looks like for billions of brazen sinners who shake their fist in God’s face, we might have pity!

For me, *after reading of mankind's hideous plight* - I for one, am not so quick to rush the world to judgment. If a little mercy now allows a few folks to avoid this terrible wrath, then my cries for justice can wait awhile!

Verse 11 takes us back to Hell... “And they had as king over them the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in Hebrew is Abaddon, but in Greek he has the name Apollyon.” Both names mean “*The Destroyer.*”

And this is how Jesus refers to Satan in John 10:10.

The Lord calls the devil a thief, who seeks “to steal, and to kill, and to destroy...” It’s Jesus who comes that we “may have life, and... have it more abundantly.”

Verse 12, “One woe is past. Behold, still two more woes are coming after these things. Then the sixth angel sounded: And I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God, saying to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, “Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates.”

The Euphrates River once ran through the Garden of Eden, and fed water to the city of Babylon. Yet at the mouth of this river there’s a holding cell. **Under the waters, in a spiritual realm, demons are kept bound.**

And could there be similar holding cells under other bodies of water around the Earth? Remember, Jesus spoke of “the gates of hell.” (plural) Does hell have multiple gates? Perhaps the Bermuda Triangle in the Caribbean, or the Devil’s Sea in the South Pacific...

Could this account for the mysterious activity that happens in these places? *It’s interesting speculation.*

Certainly, these angels are demon inmates. They’re the baddest of the bad, *and they’re very, very angry...*

“So the four angels, who had been prepared for the hour and day and month and year, were released to kill a third of mankind.” That they’re once imprisoned and now released, implies they’re fallen angels or demons.

The pale horse in Revelation 6:8 killed a fourth of the Earth’s population. Now a third of what’s left are killed.

God’s judgments are thinning out the rebels...

In verse 16 these four angels take control of a vast army. “Now the number of the army of the horsemen was two hundred million; I heard the number of them.”

Wow, 200 million troops is quite an army!

Some folks suggest current parallels - these are the Chinese, or some alliance - but that's not the point. It seems to me we're being told, in the midst of all the destruction the whole world will be in the mood to fight.

“And thus I saw the horses in the vision: those who sat on them had breastplates of fiery red, hyacinth blue, and sulfur yellow; and the heads of the horses were like the heads of lions; and out of their mouths came fire, smoke, and brimstone.” These horses could be more demons - *or this could be a first century author's description of 21st century weapons and war.*

Horses with metallic breastplates - fire flaming from their mouth - could be F16 fighter jets, and Apache helicopters. *Demons in control of a modern army.*

Today we worry about terrorist getting their hands on a nuclear bomb, but what about demons in control of sophisticated weaponry and millions of trained soldiers.

Verse 18 gives another death count. “By these three plagues a third of mankind was killed - by the fire and the smoke and the brimstone which came out of their mouths. For their power is in their mouth and in their tails; for their tails are like serpents, having heads; and with them they do harm.” When an airplane discharges a chemical or biological weapon it releases the spray from the tail to avoid harming the pilots in the cockpit.

Whatever John sees does harm from both ends.

You'd think by verse 20 the survivors would be on their knees - broken, repentant - pleading with God for mercy - *but that's not what happens...* "But the rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, that they should not worship demons, and idols of gold, silver, brass, stone, and wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk.

And they did not repent of their murders or their sorceries or their sexual immorality or their thefts."

This is the trouble with sin. It blinds you to your own stubbornness. The antidote is in front of your face, but you're too proud to take it. Even after all this judgment haughty men stiffen their neck and resist God's rule.

Which brings us *breathlessly, mercifully* to Chapter 10... "I saw still another mighty angel coming down from heaven, clothed with a cloud. And a rainbow was on his head, his face was like the sun, and his feet like pillars of fire. He had a little book open in his hand. And he set his right foot on the sea and his left foot on the land, and cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roars."

Make no mistake about it, this "*mighty angel*" has attributes that can only be applied to our Lord. Jesus has already been identified as the Lion of Judah - *He sits on Heaven's throne*. He's the King of the Jungle!

Who else but Jesus shouts "*as when a lion roars*"?

Verse 3, "When he cried out, seven thunders uttered their voices." Here's another set of judgments - seven thunders - but we don't get to hear the thunder claps...

John tells us, “Now when the seven thunders uttered their voices, I was about to write; but I heard a voice from heaven saying to me, “Seal up the things which the seven thunders uttered, and do not write them.”

Obviously, **the seven thunders** are not for us to know.

Verse 5, “The angel whom I saw standing on the sea and on the land raised up his hand to heaven...”

Realize the impressive sight we’re seeing...

This “*mighty angel*” has a rainbow for a crown... He wears a cloud for a robe... His face shines like the sun... His feet are like dual exhaust flame throwers...

And He’s got an open book in His hand!

This should be familiar. In Revelation 5 the Lion took the deed to the universe. Jesus holds title to God’s Creation. Like a lamb He paid for it with His own blood.

Now He’s cracked its seals to take possession. The trumpet judgments were the seventh and final seal.

It reminds me of the old man who met the devil. One Sunday, Satan walked right into church... Of course, when he did, everyone started jumping over pews and racing out of the building... *this was the devil himself.*

Everybody but this one old fellow. He stayed seated on the front row... *no panic at all.* Satan shouts, “Why aren’t you scared of me... Don’t you know who I am?”

The old boy shrugged, “Why would I be scared of the likes of you? I’ve lived with your sister for fifty years.”

Well, this world has been wedded to Satan for a long, long time. He's had the run of the place. Satan has had a free-hand to spread his mischief. His evil is now firmly embedded in the systems of this world.

But all this evil and rebellion is about to come to a close. On the cross Jesus redeemed the universe that was under Satan's sway. Now with the *breaking of the seals* and *blowing of the trumpets* He repos the planet.

Jesus evicts the rebels, and takes possession. And He ends up judging everyone who stands in His way.

This is what we see in verse 5. With one foot on the sea and one foot on the land, Jesus straddles continents. Like a cowboy on the back of a wild horse, He saddles up a bucking planet. He's going to break it.

With one hand He holds His proof of ownership.

Now with the other hand He takes an oath, as in a courtroom. Verse 5, He **“raised up his hand to heaven and swore by Him who lives forever and ever, who created heaven and the things that are in it, the earth and the things that are in it, and the sea and the things that are in it, that there should be delay no longer, but in the days of the sounding of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound, the mystery of God would be finished, as He declared to His servants the prophets.”**

Only Jesus can promise to finish all the promises.

And here the Lord pledges to solve the mystery of the ages... **“that there should be delay no longer...”**

Isn't this the great mystery that perplexes us today... *Why does God wait to establish His kingdom? Why has He tolerated evil for so long? Why does He listen to continual lies? Why does sin go unpunished?*

Why is Satan allowed such a long leash? Why does God wait to set the Earth in order?... Why not now?

Well, by this point in the drama the issue is a mute point, for the delay is done. The judgment has begun...

But what about for John? After this vision, he'll go back from the future to the isle of Patmos. 2000 years of inequity and injustice will await him and the Church.

The Lord Jesus does reveal to John the mystery of His delay, but He does so in a most unusual way...

You'd think Jesus would sit down with John and provide him a reasonable argument - instead He communicates *viscerally* not *rationally*. He hits John in the gut with the truth. He plucks John's heart-strings.

You've heard it said, "The way to a man's heart is through His stomach." Well that's the strategy the Lord Jesus uses on John (*and us*) at the end of Chapter 10.

Verse 8, "Then the voice which I heard from heaven spoke to me (to John) again and said, "Go, take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel who stands on the sea and on the earth." So I went to the angel and said to him, "Give me the little book."

And he said to me, "Take and eat it; and it will make your stomach bitter, but it will be as sweet as honey in your mouth." Then I took the little book out of the angel's

hand and ate it, and it was as sweet as honey in my mouth. But when I had eaten it, my stomach became bitter.” Here’s [The Revelation Realization](#).

John’s experience at the end of Chapter 10 is the whole point of the book. If you take *The Revelation* as nothing but a futuristic prophecy you’ve missed the point. It’s far more! *It’s motivation for our lives today!*

It’s more than charts and timelines - it’s a lifestyle!

As a kid growing up my favorite candy was Zotz.

It has a sour, fizzle-ly center, encased in a sweet outer shell. You start out sucking on sweetness. Then after 90 seconds or so, a sour explosion shocks your tastebuds. Zotz is the ultimate *sweet and sour experience...* until you read the book of Revelation.

At first when John eats this book it produces a sweet taste in his mouth - but as he digested its implications, and tries to stomach what it all means - the initial sweetness gets replaced with a bitter bite. What tasted like honey goes on to cause a bad case of heartburn.

Of course, no one is suggesting we add ink and paper to our daily diet. John’s experience was a metaphor. We too, need to *eat up...* [“The Revelation.”](#)

We need to read and grasp its full implications!

We should dwell on Jesus - not just as He once was, but as He now is and will be. We need to celebrate His role as the King of the Jungle. Jesus will tame the rebellion, and evict the usurper, and right all wrongs...

And initially this produces a sweet taste!

Imagine, when Jesus kisses away my pain - and my fears finally end in His loving embrace - and the burdens I've carried roll away for the last time - and He welcomes this weary traveler home... *Who among us isn't excited about the second coming of Jesus Christ?*

But when you mull over what this means for humanity as a whole - and members of your family in particular - and friends and acquaintances and co-workers... *It's hard to stomach!* It creates a *heartburn*.

We're quick to condemn to Hell the nameless driver that cuts us off in traffic, but one day Hell will be unleashed on people we know and love... *the people who refuse to yield their lives to the authority of Jesus.*

If you read Revelation - then lay your Bible down and resume your normal activities - go back to the TV, or the video game, or Pinterest... *then you didn't get it!*

You understand Revelation when it hits you in the gut, and you realize what's at stake for you and others.

John records his reaction to his sweet and sour experience in verse 11, **“And he said to me, “You must prophesy again about many peoples, nations, tongues, and kings.”** John needs to keep preaching the Gospel.

It's been said, **“Without tears the Revelation was not written, neither can it without tears be understood.”**

God is wanting John to feel what He feels. He takes no personal pleasure in judgment. His thoughts are also sweet and sour. He loves us, but He hates sin.

Realize, no matter how you interpret “the four horsemen,” “the burning mountain,” “the locust” *the point is this...* Jesus wins in the end! He eliminates the opposition. That’s why we need to bow to Jesus, join His team, and persuade everyone else to do the same.

In the next chapter we see God’s love on display.

Even in the midst of mankind’s rebellion, God seeks peace. You could say, “God holds out an olive branch to this wicked world!” Literally, He extends two olive branches. Not literal *limbs*, but *lights* - **two witnesses**.

Revelation 11 proves that God’s love is incurable.

You can grieve God, provoke God, anger God - even push God into a corner where He’s forced to judge you. *But you’ll never cause God to stop loving you!*

Events seen in chapter 11 appear in a future Temple that’s yet to be built! In verse 1 John sets the stage...

“Then I was given a reed like a measuring rod. And the angel stood, saying, “Rise and measure the temple of God, the altar, and those who worship there.”

The Revelation came to John around 95 AD - *long after the Roman Legion destroyed the Jewish Temple.*

John had frequented that Temple since he was a tot.

He'd offered sacrifices in the Temple. In the Temple precincts Jesus taught and performed miracles. John was shocked when Jesus predicted its destruction.

Yet true to His word the Romans toppled the Temple. Not one stone was left upon another... Here now John gets a glimpse into the future and sees a new Temple.

For the last 1942 years the Jews have been without a Temple. Currently, their sacred site - Mount Moriah or the Temple Mount - houses several Muslim structures.

The most prominent building, the Dome of the Rock, was built in 691 AD by Caliph Omar. For 1300 years, except for a brief time during the Crusades, the Temple Mount has remained under Islamic control - *until today!*

It was in June, 1967 - during the Six Day War - that Israeli paratroopers led by General Moshe Dayan, stormed East Jerusalem and took control of the Mount.

For the first time in nearly 2000 years the Jews had access to their sacred site. The rebuilding of the Jewish Temple was now within the realm of possibility.

Yet sadly, Dayan chose to placate the Arabs by assigning the muslim religious authority administration of the Temple Mount. Today, Jews worship at the Wailing Wall west of the mount - and Israeli soldiers patrol the 35 acre platform - but all religious activities on the mount itself are supervised by the Muslims.

Over the last 55 years, the Jewish desire to rebuild the Temple has intensified... Groups have formed. Preparations have been made. Even actions plotted.

Historian, Israel Eldad, stresses the urgency Israelis feel to rebuild a Temple. “From David’s liberation of Jerusalem until the construction of the Temple by Solomon, only one generation passed. So it is with us.”

When asked what will become of the mosque, Eldad replied, “Who knows? Perhaps, an earthquake.”

I believe a more creative solution will be found...

Notice, in verse 1 John is told to measure the Temple, but he gets further instructions in verse 2, “But leave out the court which is outside the temple, and do not measure it, for it has been given to the Gentiles.”

The Temple’s outer court is given to the Gentiles.

Until recently it was assumed by Jews and Muslims that the Dome of the Rock was built on top of the stone where the Ark sat in the Holy of Holies in the Temple.

Today though, that assumption is debated.

Some archeologists now believe the true site was actually 300 yards north of the Dome directly across from the Eastern Gate. The Jewish Mishnah said the High Priest standing in the Holy of Holies could look through the veil, out the doors, and see the East Gate.

When we go to the Temple Mount I can’t wait to get to the little gazebo, northwest of the Dome of the Rock.

Muslims call it “The Dome of the Tablets” or the “The Dome of the Spirit” – both fitting names for the site of the Temple. Under the cupola is a slab of bedrock.

For me this the actual location of the Holy of Holies.

And if enough Jews reach a similar conclusion this could figure mightily into future negotiations. This new site puts the muslim shrine in the Temple's outer court.

Notice, in Revelation 11 the angel tells John to measure the Temple - *all but the "outer court" - why?*

It'll be *"given to the Gentiles."* Perhaps the rider on the white horse - the world leader who brokers a false peace will do so by striking a deal allowing for both a Jewish Temple and a muslim mosque side-by-side?

Verse 1 **sets the stage**. Verse 2 **sets the time**...

Of the Gentiles mentioned in verse 1 we're told, *"And they will tread the holy city underfoot for 42 months."*

Here is the first mention in Revelation of a timetable. And it harkens back to a famous biblical time frame.

Daniel 9 appoints 70 weeks of 7 years, or 490 years, for the fulfillment of God's promises to Israel. It's an amazing prophecy. It predicted the day Jesus rode His donkey down the Mount of Olives and presented Himself as Israel's Messiah - 500 years in advance.

But the prophecy hasn't been completely fulfilled, for it leaves one week, a final 7 year period, for the future.

It begins when a Roman ruler signs a treaty with Israel, and concludes with God's final judgment. And in between - at the midpoint of the 7 years - the 42 month mark - events occur that relate to the rebuilt Temple.

The Roman leader who signed the treaty, breaks it, and desecrates the Jewish Temple. As the Romans of old, he erects an idol in its precincts. It's a blasphemy.

The Gentiles will *"tread the holy city underfoot"* for the last half of these seven years, or for *"42 months."*

The negotiations that allowed the Jews to build their Temple will be replaced with policies of oppression.

Verse 3, *"And I will give power to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy 1260 days, clothed in sackcloth."* The 1,260 days is another way to count 42 months, or half of 7 years. Two witnesses will speak for God in Jerusalem - the Temple - against the rebellion.

These two men will literally be God's dynamic duo.

Along with the 144,000 witnesses - and the angels in the heavens - they preach God's final offer of salvation.

These men are clothed in sackcloth not Gucci suits. They oppose all that this materialistic world values. They call the Earth to repentance and faith in Jesus, the true Christ. This draws the ire of the false Christ.

Verse 4, *"These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands standing before the God of the earth."*

Here's an allusion to Zechariah 4. The prophet saw two lamps whose light was fueled by a perpetual flow of olive oil. They drew their oil straight from the trees.

In Zechariah the lamps represented Israel's current leaders... *Joshua the Priest, Zerubbabel the governor.*

And the olive trees represented the power that fueled these men. Zechariah 4:6, "This is the word of the LORD... 'not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit...'"

The two men in Zechariah's day, as well as the two witnesses of the last days - *as well as, all God's witnesses, even today* - are empowered by His Spirit.

All Christian witness is fueled by the Holy Spirit. A Spirit-filled person has a source that never runs dry.

There's a perpetual spring of love, and goodness, and peace, and joy, and power running under the surface of their life... It was true of this dynamic duo.

But verse 5 tells us more. "And if anyone wants to harm them, fire proceeds from their mouth and devours their enemies. And if anyone wants to harm them, he must be killed in this manner." These are not your ordinary Christian soldiers. These men are special ops.

They're in a secret program - "Witness Protection."

Often times between services I go to the bathroom and brush my teeth. I don't want to talk to someone or pray with someone, and *offend* them with bad breath.

But these witnesses *defend* themselves with bad breath. It's a lethal case of halitosis. They spew fire.

Understand, these men are more *OT prophets* than *NT pastors*. They're God's last call. They're *a warning to the world*, and **a witness to the Jew**. Recall they're in Jerusalem, at the Temple. Their focus is on Israel.

Their ministry has a special appeal to the Jews.

Verse 6, "These have power to shut heaven, so that no rain falls in the days of their prophecy; and they have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to strike the earth with all plagues, as often as they desire." If you know the OT, torching enemies and shutting off the rain sounds like Elijah. Changing water to blood and calling up plagues is from Moses' arsenal.

It's possible that the two witnesses of Revelation 11 will be guest appearances by both Moses and Elijah. This would be the perfect pair to reach Jews. Moses represents God's Law - Elijah was God's chief prophet.

Recall Matthew 17, on top of Mount Hermon, Jesus countenance changed. His face shined. His clothes sparkled. His humanity was peeled back, and His glory peeked through. And guess who appeared alongside Him? There were two witnesses - Moses and Elijah.

Of course, there're other theories as to their identity, but *who they are* is not the point. What's strategic is *what they do* and *why* - These are God's last ditch duo.

John 1:11 says of Jesus "He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him." While on Earth the Jews were Jesus' priority. He came to the Jews first - then to Gentiles... And Jews will also receive His last appeal!

These two men will be witnesses to the Jews.

And what happens next in verse 7 is sure to have a sobering effect... “When they finish their testimony, the beast that ascends out of the bottomless pit will make war against them, overcome them, and kill them...”

Here a hellish Beast ascends from the bottomless pit. He’s the rider on the white horse who brokers the false peace in Revelation 6. He’s called *the Antichrist*.

And he puts out a contract on God’s two witnesses.

For 42 months the Beast has been unable to touch them, but now that their message is delivered God lifts His witness protection. They are killed in the streets.

Verse 8, “And their dead bodies will lie in the street of the great city which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified.” These two men lie in the same streets through which they carried Jesus’ corpse. This is God’s “*holy city*” - Jerusalem!

Yet look at its nicknames. “*Sodom*” was notorious for *immorality and sexual perversion*. “*Egypt*” was the hotbed for *idolatry and spiritual perversion*... Jerusalem is holy in name only. And that’s still the case today.

One day it’s streets will run red with innocent blood.

“Then those from the peoples, tribes, tongues, and nations will see their dead bodies three-and-a-half days, and not allow their dead bodies to be put into graves.” The Beast - this self-proclaimed King of Jerusalem - keeps the bodies on ice as an example to anyone else who dares to call for repentance and faith.

Notice the technology this anticipates - *“Nations will see their dead bodies.”* Prior to the first satellite TV broadcast in 1962 this was impossible. Now there’s CNN Live. In fact, log on to the Wailing Wall webcam, and you’ll see a 24 hour live stream already in place.

The Antichrist kills these men and calls it a holiday.

In verse 10 the world celebrates an *Anti-Christmas*. *“And those who dwell on the earth will rejoice over them, make merry, and send gifts to one another...”*

I once saw a Christmas card that depicted a happy family around the Christmas tree. It then quoted verse 10, *“make merry, and send gifts to one another.”*

The quote was accurate, but the context was all wrong... Here God’s servants are murdered, and folks around the world *carol, drink eggnog, exchange gifts...*

It’s the Anti-Christmas for an Antichrist world.

And here’s why the world celebrated... *“because these two prophets tormented those who dwell on the earth.”* The faithfulness of two men tortured the souls of all men. Today’s world wants to drown out the truth.

They don’t want to hear... *Marriage is only between a man and a woman... Life begins at conception... The only one way to God is Jesus - all paths don’t lead to God... The Bible is more important than your opinion... Morality isn’t open to your private interpretation...*

These positions are hated now, and they will be in the future. They’ll cause the death of God’s servants.

Imagine, the Antichrist is throwing a party. The world is tuned in. It's like Time Square on New Year's Eve.

Everybody's glass is raised. It's time for a toast.

When suddenly the camera spins around and focuses on the corpses of the two dead witnesses...

Verse 11, "Now after the three-and-a-half days the breath of life from God entered them, and they stood on their feet..." The witnesses come to life. Don't be shocked if Ole Wolf Blitzer swallows his microphone.

The world is at the party, hoping to see the apple drop - but God warns them the hammer is about to fall.

And the result, "and great fear fell on those who saw them. And they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, "Come up here." And they ascended to heaven in a cloud, and their enemies saw them."

Verse 13, "In the same hour there was a great earthquake, and a tenth of the city fell. In the earthquake 7000 people were killed, and the rest were afraid and gave glory to the God of heaven."

If you've been to the Old City of Jerusalem you've seen the tight quarters. Imagine the devastation that will occur when the walls crumble and roofs cave in.

Yet this is what it'll take for the Jews to be saved.

In this final seven years, they'll see the Antichrist as the false-christ. Their error will be obvious, and they'll embrace Jesus as their Lord. He says in Zechariah 12:10, "They will look on Me whom they have pierced."

Paul predicts this in Romans 11:26. In the end “all Israel will be saved.” *And this event is a turning point...*

Verse 14, “The second woe is past. Behold, the third woe is coming quickly.” A 7th trumpet is about to blow.

“Then the seventh angel sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, “The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!”

In the Greek language there’s a way to speak of a future event in the past tense - so when you hear it you realize the person has total certainty of the outcome.

This is the language in verse 14. Heaven is anticipating the final victory. It’s inevitable. His kingdom is about to swallow up all the kingdoms of man. It’s a jungle out there, but Jesus is the King of the jungle!

Verse 16, “And the twenty-four elders who sat before God on their thrones fell on their faces and worshiped God, saying: “We give You thanks, O Lord God Almighty, the One who is and who was and who is to come, because You have taken Your great power and reigned.” Again, it’s not just that Jesus will reign. He is reigning right now. He has the open scroll in His hand.

Jesus did the heavy-lifting on the cross. Now all that’s left is to *evict the rebels* and *repo the planet*.

But don’t expect a concession speech from the opposition. Verse 18 says, “The nations were angry...”

Here's man's problem in a nutshell, people don't like to be told what they can and can't do. *They get angry.*

But *man's wrath* won't stop *God's wrath*.

Understand, God has a To-Do list at the end of the age... Verse 18, “**And Your wrath has come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that You should reward Your servants the prophets and the saints, and those who fear Your name, small and great, and should destroy those who destroy the earth.**”

Before it's over Jesus *judges souls who died without Christ - rewards God's faithful servants - and destroys those who's rebellion caused God to destroy His own creation...* How's that for a full day at the office!

The chapter ends, “**Then the temple of God was opened in heaven, and the ark of His covenant was seen in His temple. And there were lightnings, noises, thunderings, an earthquake, and great hail.**” *It's a tale of two temples...* In the Temple on Earth there's chaos and carnage - while all is in order in Heaven's Temple.

The Earth has rebuffed God's last ditch duo. Now the dye is cast. God's love is forever, but not His pardon. Reject God long enough, and He'll honor that decision.

It's ironic, but *mankind's spiritual bankruptcy* gets revealed in **Chapter 11**. God's message is love, but the world kills the messengers. No wonder “*great hail*” awaits people of this world - *in more ways than one.*