

“A SATANIC CHRISTMAS”

Revelation 11:3-13

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INTRODUCTION

Dean Alford stated concerning this passage: “No solution has ever been given to this portion of the prophecy.” The fact of the matter is that no historical explanation works for this prophecy; there are too many literal details.

Certainly, no Christian witnesses in history have had such power or success!

Notice that these words are explained to John by either the Lord himself or his angel. There is no mention of a vision given to John at this place.

Let us look at these two witnesses and identify them and their work.

I. THEIR IDENTITY (3-4)

A. Witnesses (3)

- Two—cf. Dt. 19:15; Jesus’ going 2 by 2.
- “My”—God the Father’s—cf. v. 8 where Jesus is in the third person.
- Those who speak for and of God-- two literal people!
- They are sent by God to correct Israel.

B. Lampstands and Olive Trees

- **cf. Zechariah 4** where we see the sevenfold lampstand and two olive trees – and especially verse six where God says, “not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit.” Note also the expression “the two sons of oil”—the reference there being to Joshua and Zerubbabel.
- Here John alters the picture – they are called prophets, two lampstands, and two olive trees—the same two men are both the trees and the lampstands.
- As in the earlier time of the Prophet Zechariah, Israel is restored after fallen through the power of God!

C. Suggested identities

1. Israel and the church
2. Israel and the word of God
3. The church
4. Representatives of “witness” during the great tribulation
5. Individuals, yet representative of a larger witness
6. Enoch and Elijah—this is a very popular view [explain]
7. Moses and Elijah – cf. Malachi 4:4-5 where both names are mentioned; also compare Matthew 17:3 where they appeared on the mount of Transfiguration. Note the miracles of verse six that resembled the miracles of these two men.
8. **Two prophets Living at that time**, in “the spirit and power of Elijah” [Luke 1:17 – as did John the Baptist] cf. Matthew 11:14; 17:10-13.

- These two prophets represent Moses and Elijah.
- They represent the law and the prophets.
- The dead do not return to live on earth again; and there is no reason for Elijah to have to come back in order to die.

II. THEIR JOB (3)—Seen in two passages

- Zechariah 4: restoration of Israel as empowered by God; notice the expression “they stand before the Lord of all the earth”—Zech. 4:12; Rev. 11:4. This is a theocratic title.
 - Mal. 4:5-6 & Lk. 1:17—“Restore the hearts of the fathers and the children lest the earth be put under a “ban”.
- A. Nature: “prophecy”—v. 3; persons do this!
- B. Duration: 1, 260 days-- the last 3 ½ years of tribulation; judgments are carried out and they receive necessary protection.
- C. Character: sackcloth
- This is the garb of prophets such as Elijah – II Kings 1:8
 - Compare Zechariah 13:4 where imitators, false prophets, wear sackcloth.
 - The clothing shows their humility, repentance, the doom of the wicked, the deprivation and sorrow taking place in the world.

III. THEIR PROTECTION (5) “fire from their mouths”

- Compare Jeremiah 5:14
- Compare the judgment through Elijah in II Kings 1:9-16
- Compare the judgment in the days of Moses – numbers 16:35
- Notice that the desires of their enemies did not succeed.

IV. THEIR WORKS (6)—These are times of judgment; how different from the present dispensation!

- A. Prevent rain—cf. Elijah and II Kings 17 (see James 5:17—for 3 ½ years)
- B. Turn waters into blood—cf. Moses – Exodus 7:2.
- C. Smite the earth with plagues – I Samuel 4:8 (statement by the Philistines about Egyptian plagues)
- Cf. Moses—Ex. 8-11
 - Plagues of these witnesses are not limited: “as often as they desire”—v. 6.

[Next time we see their defeat and their triumph!]

V. THEIR DEFEAT (7-10)

When their testimony is finished (v. 7)—under God’s permission!

A. Their Conqueror (7)

1. His Identity: the Beast: See Dan. 7:7, 19-20; Rev. 13:1; 17:8
2. His Origin—“out of the abyss” (the Dragon gives him power, throne, authority—13:2)
3. His action—“makes war” (cf. Rev.12—Michael and Lucifer)
4. His Success—“overcomes and kills them” (cf. Dan. 7:21; Rev. 13:7)

B. Their Humiliation (8-10)

1. Treatment of their bodies (8-9)—“corpse”; v. 9—Not permit dead bodies to be put in a tomb
Utmost dishonor to not receive proper burial [cf. Saul’s body in OT—I Sam 31:8-13; also Jeroboam’s sons; Baasha’s sons]
 - a. Place of exhibition (8) : “Great city” (not Babylon here, as elsewhere in Rev. except 21:10)
 - Sodom—cf. Is. 1:9—We would be like Sodom; Ezek. 16:46-55—Samaria is Sodom.
 - Egypt
 - Where the Lord was crucified
 - Cf. v. 2: “Holy City”!
 - b. People who view the bodies (9)
Cosmopolitan group—worldwide alliance with Antichrist
TV and Satellite not required for this—can be personally present also—travel.
 - c. Duration of viewing (9)—3 ½ days—like their 3 ½ year ministry
2. Celebration of their enemies (10)
 - “A fiendish and childish display”
 - Cf. Jn. 16:20—world rejoiced at Jesus’ death
 - **A Satanic Christmas!**
 - a. Gloating
 - “Earth-dwellers”
 - “Rejoice over them”—**only mention of joy during the Tribulation Period!**
 - The wicked are perverted!
 - b. Partying—“making merry”
 - c. Gift Exchange
 - No more torment from these two witnesses
 - Tormented in both body and mind
 - Cf. I K. 18:17—Elijah accused of being the “troubler of Israel”

VI. THEIR TRIUMPH (11-12)

A. Resurrection (11)—the language of Ezek. 37:10 is used here of resurrection of restored Israel

1. “Breath of life”—cf. Gen. 2:7
2. Standing upright
3. Fear of those looking on—beholding.

- B. Ascension (12)—cf. Elijah and Enoch and the “Assumption of Moses”
1. Voice of God: “Come up here”—cf. 4:1)—loud, emphasizing its power and dignity, and divine origin—from Heaven.
 2. Cloud of Glory—“Went up to Heaven in the cloud”
 - Cf. Elijah “in a whirlwind
 - Cf. tradition of Moses’ ascension in a cloud
 3. Beheld by their enemies—with mouths gaping wide!

CONCLUSION

A Public Exhibition: not a “secret rapture”!

The Celebration of a Satanic Christmas turns to ashes.

God’s servants triumph!

Such is the glorious finale for those who will be His witnesses!