

Quarter Two: The Great Controversy

Lesson 6—The Two Witnesses

Sunday: Two Witnesses

May 5, 2024

- **Last Week:** “Faith Against All Odds”
 - Faith of the reformers
 - The veracity and importance of the Word of God
 - Salvation by grace through faith – righteousness by faith

- **This Week:** “The Two Witnesses”
 - 2 Cor 13:8, KJV – “For we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth.”

 - Lesson (Sabbath): “God’s Word has been dissected, doubted, and discarded. It has been chained in monasteries, burned in public squares and torn to shreds. Its believers have been ridiculed, mocked, imprisoned, and even martyred. Through it all, God’s Word has prevailed.”
 - **Memory Text:** “The grass withers, the flower fades, but the Word of our God stands forever.” (Isa 40:8, NKJV)

 - Roman Church sought to stamp out God’s Word – almost succeeded
 - Waldenses copied Scriptures & passed out

 - The Reformation saw the resurgence of faith in God’s Word
 - 1376 - John Wycliffe (Morning Star of the Reformation) criticized the practices & beliefs of the Catholic Church & worked on a translation of the Bible into English

 - 1402 - John Hus challenged the pope’s authority and the sale of indulgences and upheld the Bible as the authority in faith and practice

 - 1517 - Martin Luther in Germany (start of Protestant Reformation with his 95 Theses) brought us justification by faith (salvation by grace through faith in Jesus alone)

 - 1518 – Philip Melanchthon – joins with Luther, encourages him to translate Bible into German

 - 1519 – Zwingli – launches Swiss Reformation

 - 1525 – Anabaptist movement begins in Zurich

 - 1526 - William Tyndale in England brought us the Word of God in English (language of the common people)

 - Around 1530 - John Calvin broke with the Catholic Church

- Lesson: “This week, we explore one of the most vicious attacks on the Scriptures & the Christian faith,” the French Revolution where “blood flowed in the streets of France... Atheism became the state religion. Nevertheless, the witness of God’s Word could not be silenced.”

Memory Text: “The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God stands forever.” (Isa 40:8, NKJV)

The week in brief:

- 1. **Sunday:** Sunday: Two Witnesses (Jill)
 - Rev 11:3 – 6 – identity of the 2 witnesses, prophesying under the dark ages
- 2. **Monday:** Prophetic Time Periods (Ryan)
 - Rev 11:3, Dan 7, Rev 12 – 1,260 year period of papal supremacy & suppression of the Word (538 AD – 1798)
- 3. **Tuesday:** The Two Witnesses are Killed (John D)
 - Rev 11:7 – 9 – the French Revolution & the killing of the 2 witnesses (OT & NT) by atheism and immorality (1793 – 1797)
- 4. **Wednesday:** The Two Witnesses Resurrected (James)
 - Rev 11:11 – resurgence of the Word of God at the end of the 1700s
- 5. **Thursday:** Truth Triumphant (John L)
 - Rev 11:15 – 18 – 7th trumpet; close of probation; the eventual triumph of God’s people

Sunday: Two Witnesses

Rev 11:3 - 6

- Rev 8 & 9 – 1st through 6th trumpets
 - Rev 10 & 11 = provides a view of God’s people toward the end of history
- Rev 10
 - Mighty Angel with little book
 - Mighty Angel = Christ Himself
 - Sealed book = Daniel / specifically, 2,300 day prophecy
 - Comparison with Daniel
 - 1. Dan 10 – Jesus appears to Daniel glorified
 - Rev 10 – Jesus appears to John glorified
 - 2. Dan 12 – book of Daniel is “sealed” or closed
 - Rev 10 – Book of Daniel is “unsealed” or opened
 - 3. Dan 12 – Jesus stands on “waters of the river”
 - Rev 10 – Jesus stands on the “sea” and “earth”
 - 4. Dan 12 – Jesus lifts up hands unto “heaven”
 - Rev 10 – Jesus lifts up “hand to heaven”
 - 5. Dan 12 – Jesus “swore by him that lives forever”
 - Rev 10 – Jesus swore by him that lives forever
 - 6. Dan 12 – Jesus says there shall be “time”
 - Rev 10 – Jesus says there will be “time no longer”

- John eats the little book
 - John ate the little book of Daniel
 - Sweet in the mouth; bitter in the stomach
- God's people – Millerite movement leading up to 1844
 - Great excitement for Jesus' second coming (sweet in the mouth)
 - Great Disappointment of early Advent believers (bitter in the stomach)
- Last verse (Rev 10:11) – “And he said to me, ‘You must prophesy **again** about many peoples, nations, tongues, and kings.’”
 - Again – could be translated “to” as in Rev 14:6
- Rev 11:3 – 6 (the Two Witnesses)
 - Vs 3 – “And I will give power to my two **witnesses**, and they will prophesy one thousand two hundred and sixty days, clothed in **sackcloth**.”
 - Two witnesses = God's Word (OT & NT) **and** the proclamation of God's Word
 - Refers immediately to Moses & Elijah
 - Moses reference in Vs 6 with the 10 plagues in Egypt
 - Elijah reference in Vs 6 with no rain (3 ½ years = 1,260 years)
 - Concept of 2
 - Ancient Israel's legal system required 2 witnesses to verify something as true
 - Jesus sent His disciples out to preach, two by two
 - 1,260 days (years) = Years of papal supremacy
 - 538 AD – 1798 AD
 - Vs 2 – “tread the holy city underfoot for 42 months”
 - Trampling of Jerusalem = a symbol of the persecution of God's people
 - 42 months = 1,260 days = 3 ½ years
 - Ryan's day
 - Clothed in sackcloth = signifies mourning
 - Word of God was suppressed for 1,260 years (papal supremacy)
 - Dark time, no Word – traditions of men upheld over Word
 - Little proclamation of the Word (pockets of Waldensians)
 - Difficult time of proclamation of the Word, due to persecution
 - Dry time (3 ½ years of no rain) – symbolizes no Word of God / no proclamation of that Word
 - Amos 8:11 – “Behold, the days are coming,’ says the Lord God, ‘That I will send a famine on the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord.’”
 - Isa 55:10, 11a – “For as the rain comes down, and the snow from heaven, and do not return there, but water the

earth...(11) So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth, it shall not return to Me void; but it shall accomplish what I please..."

- Eph 5:26 – cleansed with the washing of the water of the Word
- Vs 4 – “These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands standing before the God of the earth.”
 - (Represents God’s Word being proclaimed in the power of the HS to lighten the world)
 - 2 olive trees
 - In Zechariah’s vision of Zech 4, they represented 2 anointed ones -
 - Joshua the high priest (priestly role)
 - Zerubbabel the governor of Judea (royal role)
 - As the olive branches are portrayed furnishing oil for the lamps of the sanctuary, so from these holy ones before the throne of God the Holy Spirit is imparted to men.
 - The Holy Spirit inspired the OT & NT Scriptures
 - John 5:39 – “Search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me.”
 - GC, p. 267 – “The two witnesses represent the Scriptures of the Old and the New Testament. Both are important testimonies to the origin and perpetuity of the law of God. Both are witnesses also to the plan of salvation. The types, sacrifices, and prophecies of the OT point forward to a Savior to come. The Gospels and Epistles of the NT tell of a Saviour who has come in the exact manner foretold by type and prophecy.”
 - 2 lampstands =
 - Word of God = Ps 119:105 – “Your Word is a lamp to my feet, and a light to my path.”
 - The Holy Spirit inspired the Word
 - The church as His representative = Rev 1:20 – the 7 lampstands represent the 7 churches
 - God’s people are filled with the Holy Spirit to proclaim His Word
- Vs 5 – “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.”
 - Fire from their mouth to kill their enemies – immediate reference to King Ahaziah & Elijah
 - Fire came down from heaven & consumed the 50 men (2 sets of them)
 - Application today: those who persist in resisting the Holy Spirit’s invitation, will eventually be destroyed in the lake of fire

