

TWO WITNESSES: A BIBLICAL STUDY

BY CHARLES E. WHEELING

Question for Charles:

I read your articles most of the time. The one recently about Moses and (Elijah) fulfilling Revelation chapter 11, is one I want to respond to...

My question: “How could immortal beings come (from Heaven) and be put to death? They lived once and were taken to Heaven—*Moses died already one time*—how could he die again?

“It seems to me that there must be an alternate interpretation.”

M.

Hello, M: Your questions regarding the identity of the **Two Witnesses** is one of several received here following my recent *visual commentary* on Revelation chapter 11, ***Timing Is Everything***. For years I have met similar questions when broaching this subject of the **Two Witnesses** in my Prophecy Seminars. But Seminar time constraints with advertised topics to be presented, never seemed to offer sufficient time for a *meaningful response* from Scripture.

Because I believe the subject of the **Two Witnesses** goes to the heart of the book of Revelation and end-of-time prophecy, I have chosen to address *your questions* so you and others expressing interest in this issue will be able to fairly consider my position.

M., your question(s) appear simple enough, ***but they are not simple***; they are complex because of ***an assumption*** you and others have made

regarding Moses, Elijah and *immortality*. My reply will be somewhat lengthy; nevertheless, if you and my readers will bear with me, I propose to answer your question(s) directly, *including the issue of Moses and Elijah being immortal souls (“cannot die”) because they are already in Heaven*. I will do my best to offer *solid Scripture*—at least to my understanding.

PART 1: A Biblical Background (Scriptures are *King James Version* unless otherwise noted)

Virtually every question I have ever received regarding the **Two Witnesses** has focused upon *their identity*—“**WHO are the Two Witnesses?**”

To my remembrance, no one has ever asked the begging, *first question*—“**WHY are the Two Witnesses?!**”

The *principle* of “doubling” for certainty and truthful verification spans the whole of Scripture, *Old and New Testaments*. (Webster’s, *principle = fundamental law*.) Here are a few verses:

“At the mouth of **two witnesses**, or three witnesses, shall he that is worthy of death be put to death; but at the mouth of one witness he shall not be put to death.”

Deuteronomy 17:6

“Whoso killeth any person, the murderer shall be put to death by the mouth of **witnesses**: but one witness shall not testify against any person to cause him to die.”

Numbers 35:30

As a slave in Egypt, Joseph understood Heaven’s *fundamental law of doubling*, answering Pharaoh:

“And for that the dream was **doubled** unto Pharaoh **twice**; it is because the thing is **established** by God, and God will shortly bring it to pass.”
Genesis 41:32

Before he was sold by his brothers into slavery, we have this record of God *doubling* dreams to Joseph:

“And **Joseph dreamed a dream (1)**, and he told it his brethren: and they hated him yet the more. And he said unto them, Hear, I pray you, **this dream (1)** which I have dreamed: For, behold, we were binding sheaves in the field, and, lo, my sheaf arose, and also stood upright; and, behold, your sheaves stood round about, and made obeisance to my sheaf. And his brethren said to him, Shalt thou indeed reign over us? or shalt thou indeed have dominion over us? And they hated him yet the more for his dreams, and for his words. And **he dreamed yet another dream (2)**, and told it his brethren, and said, Behold, **I have dreamed a dream more (2)**; and, behold, the sun and the moon and the eleven stars made obeisance to me. And he told it to his father, and to his brethren: and his father rebuked him, and said unto him, What is this dream that thou hast dreamed? Shall I and thy mother and thy brethren indeed come to bow down ourselves to thee to the earth? And his brethren envied him; but his father observed the saying.”

Genesis 37:5-11

In the New Testament, the Apostle Paul understood this *fundamental law* of Scripture:

“This is the third time I am coming to you. **In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established.**”

2 Corinthians 13:1

Don't miss this point: **Jesus doubled** the *fundamental law of doubling!*

“Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. **(1) But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.** And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican. Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. **(2) Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.”**

Matthew 18:15-20

“Ye judge after the flesh; I judge no man. **And yet if I judge, my judgment is true: for I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me.** It is also written in your law, that the testimony of two men is true. **I am one that bear witness of myself, and the Father that sent me beareth witness of me.”**

John 8:15-18

Jesus, in answering his detractors, has taken us into the very Throne Room of Divinity. God is the great Lawmaker and Lawgiver! The TRUTH, **all TRUTH**, *originates* at the Throne and *resides* there. There are TWO POWERS (and sometimes THREE) that bear witness in Heaven. I will not enlarge upon this topic here, save only to offer these versus for the wise and large-of-heart:

Revelation 20:11-12 — Revelation 22:1, 3 — Revelation 21:22.

“For God speaketh once, **yea twice**, yet man perceiveth it not.”

Job 33:14

PART 2: One Witness, Two; Two Witnesses, Three...

Mercy Extended, Justice Met

Scripture is clear enough; every act of man or angel, whether righteous or unrighteous, is open to the eye of God! We, as sinners, experience grace until the Day of Judgment. Then Heaven’s **Two Witnesses** shall testify *all* they have seen and heard. There is no place for the sinner to hide, then, save in Jesus Christ—His merits, His blood, His righteousness, His gracious mercy.

“For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known. Therefore whatsoever ye have spoken in darkness shall be heard in the light; and that which ye have spoken in the ear in closets shall be proclaimed upon the housetops. And I say unto you my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. **But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell (*gehenna*); yea, I say unto you, Fear him.”**

Luke 12:2-5

Cain murdered Abel. *Cain is worthy of death, but the second witness to his crime is dead!* Therefore, mercy (grace) was extended to an undeserving sinner.

“...Cain talked with Abel his brother: and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that **Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him.** And the LORD said unto Cain,

Where is Abel thy brother? And he said, I know not: Am I my brother's keeper?" Genesis 4:8-9

Cain's life was spared until his natural death, *but his brother's blood cries for justice*: "it is appointed unto men once to die...*after this the judgment.*" Hebrews 9:27.

Noah was *one faithful witness* to a desperately wicked generation.

"And **the LORD said** unto Noah, Come thou and all thy house into the ark; for **thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation.** And every living substance was destroyed which was upon the face of the ground, both man, and cattle, and the creeping things, and the fowl of the heaven; and they were destroyed from the earth: and **Noah only remained alive, and they that were with him in the ark.**" Genesis 7:1, 23

God "spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly." 2 Peter 2:5

Had God called a second witness to that perverse generation, "no flesh should be saved out of it!"

Sodom and Gomorrah, serve as a warning, a type, an example for the last generation. The Lord visited Abraham accompanied with **two angels (witnesses)**—*their mission was two-fold*—to promise the "Son of Promise," and to promise that grace and mercy would not be extended forever to the wicked! Sodom and Gomorrah received **the fire of judgment** and sank afterward beneath the Dead Sea. (You can't write this script, folks!) Sodom and Gomorrah have never been rebuilt. **God has witnessed twice** in His Word that he will thoroughly cleanse this wicked world, *first with water; second and utterly, with fire.*

“And he [Abraham] lift up his eyes and looked, and, lo, **three men** stood by him: and when he saw them, he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself toward the ground, And **the LORD said**, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do ... And **the LORD said**, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous; I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me; and if not, I will know. And the men turned their faces from thence, and went toward Sodom.... **And there came two angels [Two Witnesses] to Sodom at even;** and Lot sat in the gate of Sodom: and Lot seeing them rose up to meet them; and he bowed himself with his face toward the ground; And the men said unto Lot, Hast thou here any besides? son in law, and thy sons, and thy daughters, and whatsoever thou hast in the city, bring them out of this place: **For we will destroy this place, because the cry of them is waxen great before the face of the LORD; and the LORD hath sent us to destroy it.”**

Genesis 18:2, 17, 20-22;

Genesis 19:1, 12, 13

“And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, **making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly;** [God] **delivered just Lot**, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked: (For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds); **The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished.”**

2 Peter 2:6-9

Sodom and Gomorrah met doom at the testimony of three witnesses: “just Lot” and “two angels”!

Elijah the prophet was **Witness One** against Ahab and Jezebel, pronouncing death upon them. But they did not die under the testimony of one witness—a *second prophet* of the Lord, **Micaiah, Witness Two** (1 Kings 22:7, 8), pronounced the same doom upon **two wicked witnesses** sitting in God’s land.

“And the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying, Arise, go down to meet Ahab king of Israel ... And thou shalt speak unto him, saying, Thus saith the LORD, Hast thou killed, and also taken possession? And thou shalt speak unto him, saying, **Thus saith the LORD, In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth shall dogs lick thy blood, even thine....** And of Jezebel also **spake the LORD, saying, The dogs shall eat Jezebel** by the wall of Jezreel.... But there was none like unto Ahab, which did sell himself to work wickedness in the sight of the LORD, whom Jezebel his wife stirred up.

“And it came to pass, when Ahab heard those words, that he rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his flesh, and fasted, and lay in sackcloth, and went softly. And the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying, Seest thou how Ahab humbleth himself before me? because he humbleth himself before me, **I will not bring the evil in his days: but in his son’s days will I bring the evil upon his house.**”

1 Kings 21:17-19, 23-25, 27-29

Elijah the prophet, one witness, joined by a **second prophet** of the Lord, **Micaiah**, pronouncing doom upon brazen wickedness being practiced in God’s land! *Is this not prophetic?* A woman who paints her face, seduces the king, declares, “*I sit a queen and shall see no*

sorrow,” yet her fate awaits her: “for these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh.”

Compare 1 Kings 21:23 with
Revelation chapters 17, 18

They called him “The Baptist.” He was Witness One. He testified of Christ, Witness Two:

“John bare **witness** of him, and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me. And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace.” John 1:15, 16

Jesus, Witness Two, testified of The Baptist, Witness One:

“There is **another who bears witness of Me**, and I know that the witness which He witnesses of Me is true. **You have sent to John, and he has borne witness** to the truth. He was a burning and a shining light: and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light.”

John 5:32, 33, 35, *NKJV*

Jesus qualifies John’s witness and mission as “for a season.” In great mercy to that generation, God permitted **John the Baptist, Witness One, to die out of season.** Thus the generation that rejected, refused, falsely accused and abused the SON OF GOD, was spared because they rejected only **ONE WITNESS, Jesus the Christ**, who prayed on His Cross, “**Father, forgive them**, for they know not what they do.”

Luke 23:34

Doubtless, some will object to my line of reasoning in Scripture, referring to Ananias and Sapphira (Acts, chapter 5), both of whom died under the testimony of One Witness!

“But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession, And kept back part of the price, his wife also being privy to it, and brought a certain part, and laid it at the apostles’ feet. But Peter said, **Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost,** and to keep back part of the price of the land? Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? **why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God.** And Ananias hearing these words fell down, and gave up the ghost...it was about the space of three hours after, when his wife, not knowing what was done, came in... **Then Peter said unto her, How is it that ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord?** behold, the feet of them which have buried thy husband are at the door, and shall carry thee out. **Then fell she down straightway at his feet, and yielded up the ghost:** and the young men came in, and found her dead, and, carrying her forth, buried her by her husband.”

Acts 5:1-5, 7-10

Here I need only to quote Jesus:

“And so I tell you this: no sin, no slander, is beyond forgiveness for man, except **slander spoken against the Spirit,** and that **will not be forgiven.** Any man who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven; but **if anyone speaks against the Holy Spirit, for him there is no forgiveness, either in this age or the age to come.**”

Matthew 12:31, 32, *NEB.*

And so we turn to the last generation, the generation that will meet God and Christ face-to-face; the generation that will choose *forever life* or *forever death*; the generation that will accept or reject the *promised fullness* of God’s Holy Spirit “poured out upon all flesh, every kindred, tongue, nation and people”!

Comprehending these things, are we now to reason—**NO, believe**, that God will close the Sanctuary work of Salvation, close Judgment in Heaven, and pass the sentence of **forever death** upon millions—perhaps billions of human beings—***without sending* Two Witnesses?**

PART 3: Immortality—Who Has It? What Is It? When Is It?

M., before offering *plain Bible* in an attempt to identify the **Two Witnesses**, there should *first* be some discussion regarding your leading question:

“How could *immortal beings* come (from Heaven to Earth) and be put to death?”

You have assumed (as do many others) that because Moses and Elijah were taken to Heaven, they are therefore “immortal.” **THIS IS AN ASSUMPTION** and does not fit the larger record of Scripture. Please consider these points:

- 1) It is possible for persons to reside in Heaven, leave Heaven, come to Earth and die. ***Jesus left Heaven, came to Earth and died!***
- 2) Moses and Elijah were taken to Heaven ***before*** Christ redeemed (*purchased*) any human being by His death!
- 3) **If Christ had failed in His earthly mission (to redeem us), is there anyone who could reasonably believe that Moses and Elijah would have remained “saved in Heaven forever *as immortal beings?!*”**

4) This was precisely the point of contention when Michael came down to resurrect Moses (Jude 9), and “the devil...disputed about the body of Moses.”

5) There is more Scripture to be accounted for here:

“(God) alone has immortality.” 1 Timothy 6:16, *AB*

“Now to the King eternal, **immortal**, invisible, **to God who alone...**” 1 Timothy 1:17, *Young’s Literal Translation*

6) As to dying once, *being resurrected and never dying again*, both Old and New Testaments refute this notion.

Old Testament example: Elijah’s prayer resurrected “the widow’s son.” Her son lived, died, lived again and died again. *No, her son did not go to Heaven at his first resurrection.* WHY NOT?

New Testament example: Jesus resurrected “Lazarus.” Lazarus lived, died, lived again and died again. *Lazarus, as far as we know, did not go to Heaven at his first resurrection.* WHY NOT?

Obviously resurrection from death does not necessarily make a mortal being—immortal. But your understanding, M., is that “going to Heaven equals immortality.” Once again: Persons can reside in Heaven, leave Heaven, come to Earth and die? ***Jesus left Heaven, came to Earth and died!***

7) The Apostle Paul addresses *our present sinful human condition* and **God’s promise of eternal life (immortality)** for otherwise lost human beings—*God’s promise is good but the tangible reality of eternal life—WHEN?*

Please consider my supplied emphasis within these verses:

“Behold, I tell you a mystery: we shall not all sleep, but **we shall all be changed**—In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, **at the last trumpet**. For the trumpet will sound and the dead will be raised **incorruptible** and **we shall be changed**.

“For this corruptible must put on incorruption and this mortal must put on immortality. So WHEN this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, THEN shall be brought to pass the saying that is written ‘Death (mortal existence) is swallowed up in victory (immortal, never-ending, eternal life).’”

1 Corinthians 15:51-54, *NKJV*

My understanding of Scripture is this:

- Christ died on the cross to redeem us (buy us back).
- “Through His blood we have forgiveness,” *but forgiveness is not yet salvation!*
- Human beings are promised salvation through Christ, (a final, tangible deliverance from this present evil world and these presently sinful bodies) *in the day of His appearing:*

“So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and **unto them that LOOK FOR HIM shall he APPEAR THE SECOND TIME without sin UNTO SALVATION.**”

8) Redeemed human beings are central to the *inheritance* Christ receives at His elevation in the Judgment, **WHEN HE BECOMES “King of Kings and Lord of Lords.” Not until Christ receives Kingship (dominion / authority) does He receive His inheritance (lawfully owns us). THEN we receive the gift, not simply the**

promise, but actually receive in our bodies the tangible gift of eternal life (immortality).

PART 4: Who Are the Two Witnesses?

M., your closing comment is noted: *“It seems to me that there must be an alternate interpretation.”*

Christians have long been exposed to a variety of “alternate interpretations” regarding the identity of the **Two Witnesses**. That so many Christians hold varying opinions concerning *the identity* of the **Two Witnesses** is proof enough there is confusion surrounding this issue.

“What saith the Scriptures?” How people read (use) Scripture is important. Millions do not read or draw their own conclusions about Scripture; rather they accept, *without questioning*, the preconceived opinions of learned priests, ministers or doctors of theology. Then again, the formal training or lack thereof can shape a person’s conclusions and interpretations of Scripture.

Several hundred Christian *denominations* exist today; each formed and framed as distinct from others because countless Christians have been taught to “proof-text” Scripture. Proof-texting Scripture, for too long has produced confusion and division. Proof-texting is the simple, pervasive practice of choosing a particular verse of Scripture and sometimes a particular word within a particular verse of Scripture. EXAMPLE: “What church do you belong to?” “I belong to the church OF GOD.” Another replies, “I belong to the church OF CHRIST.” Yet another reasons, “I belong to the TRUE church.” One emphatically declares, “I baptize only in the **name of Jesus,**” while others “baptize in the **name(s) of THE FATHER, THE SON and THE HOLY**

GHOST.” *Proof-texting Scripture is subjective and creates confusion and division!*

“We don’t see things as they are; we see them as we are.”
—Anais Nin.

More recently, many ministers and theologians are being trained to read and apply Scripture *contextually*. The difficulty, of course, is how to re-train millions of adherents to read, interpret and believe the Bible differently than they have been taught—*this has broken some denominations to shreds and caused more than a few prominent ministers and theologians to be “excommunicated.”*

Because so much *symbolism* is employed within the book of Revelation, many insist that the language of Revelation chapter 11:3-11 (the **Two Witnesses**), is *symbolic* and not to be interpreted literally. ***But the book of Revelation IS NOT ORIGINAL—JOHN WAS THE AUTHOR, BUT THE BOOK OF REVELATION CONTAINS CITATIONS FROM, OR ALLUSIONS TO, 28 OF THE 39 BOOKS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT. ACCORDING TO ONE AUTHORITY THERE ARE 505 SUCH CITATIONS AND ALLUSIONS, SOME 325 OF WHICH ARE TO THE PROPHETIC BOOKS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT—ISAIAH, JEREMIAH, EZEKIEL, AND DANIEL IN PARTICULAR. And more, and more, and more...***

So what is the **biblical context** of the **Two Witnesses**? Is it only the *symbolism* apparent in so much of Revelation, or is there a **larger context**? What are we to do with all those references to the *two witnesses* scattered throughout Scripture? “Our English word ‘Bible’ is a transliteration, through the Latin and Old French, of the Greek *biblia*, literally, ‘little books’ (*plural*).” Should *Bible study* be the study of *a single writing* or should it be the study of *a collection of writings*?

Then again, what about Jewish thought and interpretation? Are we to disregard Jewish history, Jewish understanding and Jewish

interpretation of Scripture? For the Jew, the interpretation of Scripture means the Old Testament Scripture *alone*, but as Christians, **our context is larger**, comprising both *Old and New Testaments*. We value references concerning the *two witnesses* from both Testaments, from Jesus and the Apostles, including John's vision of the **"Two Witnesses"** (Revelation chapter 11).

Regarding Jewish history and interpretation, without offering excuse, there are reasons why leading Rabbis and Scribes appeared at the River Jordan to question John the Baptist. (See John 1:19-25.) John was preaching, "Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Matthew 3:2. John's message puzzled and troubled his audience — **WHY? In plain English, John the Baptist was preaching, "Messiah is on His way!"**

Scripturally, there was good reason why leading priests of the day went out to question John, asking him plainly,

"Are you Elias [Elijah]? Art thou that Prophet [Moses]?"

When John answered, "No," to both questions, their response was:

"Then said they unto him, Who art thou? ...What sayest thou of thyself?" John 1:22.

Jesus, like John the Baptist, was also preaching,

"Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Matthew 4:17.

In plain English, Jesus was preaching, "Messiah has arrived!"

Hearing the incredulous taunts of respected religious leaders, ***Jesus' own disciples*** were at times puzzled, perhaps even troubled, regarding **Jesus' claim to be The Messiah**. His Disciples, "asked him [Jesus],

saying, Why say the scribes that Elias [Elijah] must first come?" Mark 9:11.

Though Jesus attempted to answer their questions regarding the personal appearance of Elijah (and Moses) to herald Messiah's coming—*bewildering questions persisted all the way to the Cross:*

“About the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Some of them that stood there, when they heard that, said, **This man calleth for Elias [Elijah].** And straightway one of them ran, and took a sponge, and filled it with vinegar, and put it on a reed, and gave him to drink. **The rest said, Let be, let us see whether Elias [Elijah] will come to save him.**” -Matthew 27:46-49.

Most Jews rejected Jesus at His first coming because they could not be satisfied that “Moses and Elijah had indeed returned, according to Scripture.”

Alternate Interpretations Versus Plain Scripture

One of the more popular and widely accepted interpretations identifying the **Two Witnesses** of Revelation as *the Old and New Testaments* can be traced to Sir Isaac Newton (1643-1727). Millions have read of the amazing scientific and mathematic achievements of Newton, but are unaware that Sir Isaac Newton devoted many years to the intense study of Bible prophecy, *particularly the books of Daniel and the Revelation.* He actually wrote far more regarding his study of the prophecies than he wrote about science and math!

One Christian author following Newton, George Croly (1780-1860), an Irish writer and clergyman (Dublin), expanded upon Newton's interpretation (**Two Witnesses** = Old and New Testaments) by combining Newton's views with the history of the French Revolution.

(See *The Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation* by Uriah Smith, pp. 531-541).

A careful reading of Revelation chapter 11 will reveal the inadequacies of these honest attempts to identify the **Two Witnesses**. Even if one employs *symbolism*, “their dead bodies”...“lying in the street of the great city...where also our Lord was crucified [Jerusalem]” is far removed, *literally* or *symbolically* from Paris or any other place in France!

As one friend has noted, “the **Two Witnesses** according to Revelation chapter 11, are the ‘two olive trees that stand before the Lord of all the earth,’” a verse taken directly from the Old Testament book of Zechariah, chapter 4:11-14. His conclusion specifically was, “There is no way that one of the two witnesses was the New Testament—*the New Testament was not yet written*. Also, in 1 Kings 6:32, two olive tree doors (stood) at the entrance of the Most Holy Place of Solomon’s Temple—*Elijah had not yet been born—Oops.*”

To take each point in Revelation chapter 11, regarding the **Two Witnesses**, and interpret them symbolically as past history, is to apply them out of context—**pre**-last day Beast System, **pre**-last day Antichrist, **pre**-last day Judgment, etc., in effect negating the context surrounding the preaching, death and resurrection of the **Two Witnesses** as described in the book of Revelation.

To quote myself: “History is not prophecy; *history is about the past*. Prophecy is not about the past; *prophecy is about things to come!* So that there is no misunderstanding regarding my understanding, Daniel of the Old Testament, and John of the New Testament, are indeed, **Two Witnesses!** **They are literally “dead bodies” but living through their books as last-day witnesses!**

PART 5: Plain Scripture

Plain Scripture explains why the scribes questioned John so closely concerning his preaching, “the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”

“Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet *before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD*: And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest *I come and smite the earth with a curse.*”
Malachi 4:5, 6.

Personally, I cannot fathom anyone *symbolizing* this plain Scripture. **The context of Elijah’s appearance is “before the great day of the Lord” and that great day is yet future!**

Jesus’ own Disciples found it necessary to question Him regarding prophetic declarations about the return of Moses and Elijah to announce **Messiah’s appearing at “the great day of the Lord.”**

“And his disciples asked him, saying, Why then say the scribes that Elias must first come?” Matthew 17:10

To which Jesus affirmed Malachi’s prophecy:

“Jesus answered... *Elias truly shall first come, and restore all things.*”
Matthew 17:11.

Prefacing His response, Jesus said,

“...if ye will receive it, this [John the Baptist] was Elias [Elijah] which was for to come.”

Matthew 11:13-15

(Please read these verses in context.)

NOTE: JESUS' FIRST COMING AND JOHN'S TESTIMONY REGARDING "THE KINGDOM" DID NOT MEET THE FULNESS OF GOD'S PROMISE THROUGH MALACHI.

What about Moses?

Before his death, Moses prophesied:

“The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee...like unto me....”

Deuteronomy 18:15, 18

NOTE: IN TIME JESUS WOULD SATISFY SOME OF HIS DISCIPLES' QUESTIONS BY TAKING PETER, JAMES AND JOHN TO THE MOUNT OF TRANSFIGURATION, THUS ALLOWING THEM TO WITNESS MOSES AND ELIJAH ADDRESS HIM AS THE TRUE MESSIAH.

NOTE: More than once Jesus quoted and applied *partial* Scripture—Scripture that could pertain to both of His Messianic visits; *an example is found in Luke 4:16-29*. **Jesus found it absolutely necessary to say to His followers, especially His Disciples, “I am the promised Messiah, in person.”** **But He could not dare [AND HE DID NOT] allow His followers to understand fully that His Kingly, Messianic reign remained in the distant, prophetic, future!** Jesus kept many things hidden from His Disciples:

“I have yet many things to say unto you, but you cannot bear them NOW. Howbeit, when he, the Spirit of truth, is come [Latter rain?!], he will guide you into all truth...**and he will shew you things to come.**” John 16:12, 13.

Without offense, the identity of the **Two Witnesses** is, for me, clear enough in Scripture. Some have attempted to “set me right” by quoting favorite Christian authors, preferred ministers or traditional

interpretations but I feel compelled to stay within the bounds of Canonical Scripture.

Two Witnesses, A Follow-up

I continue to receive interesting comments regarding the identity and mission of the **Two Witnesses** described in Revelation chapter 11. Of course, some comments are positive and some in total disagreement with my conclusions. Because I have never claimed “infallibility” and because I do not believe these issues constitute “Salvation” for anyone, I am not in the least troubled or puffed-up when others agree or disagree.

After years of meeting “other minds,” I have observed several *truisms* describing human behavior. One truism goes something like this: “An object in motion tends to remain in motion, and an object at rest (not moving) tends to remain at rest.” Are we talking here of “bodies at rest” or “minds at rest?”—*the answer is YES! Physically or mentally, moving or resting, human beings are resistant to change—this includes Charles Wheeling.* Thus a second truism: “The older a person becomes the more desirable *rest* becomes (*not moving*).”

Yet, a third behavioral truism: “Not all minds reason *alike*.” Is there a place for reason and logic in the study of Scripture? From my perspective some people reason in circles, *beginning with a conclusion and arriving at the same conclusion, thus proving themselves correct.* This does not seem to me to constitute logical or reasonable investigation. More reasonably, at least I think so, one should begin with a hypothesis (1. a theory needing investigation; 2. an assumption), then proceed to investigate the theory, following where the evidence leads.

Several have responded, urging me to reconsider the interpretive identity of the **Two Witnesses**; insisting Old and New Testament Scripture are the **Two Witnesses**, rather than the living persons of Moses and Elijah. *It's time to put Scripture to the test:*

“And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy **a thousand two hundred and threescore days**, clothed in sackcloth.” Revelation 11:3.

“These have power **to shut heaven, that it rain not [Elijah?!]** in the days of their prophecy: and have **power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues [Moses?!]**, as often as they will.” Revelation 11:6.

To “shut Heaven, that it rain not,” clearly refers to Elijah and “power over waters to turn them to blood, and smite...with plagues” clearly refers to Moses! **EVEN IF I WERE TO ACCEPT MOSES AND ELIJAH AS “TYPES,” THEY WERE BOTH OLD TESTAMENT PROPHETS! *Where is the logic that will interpret two Old Testament prophets as “typing” Old and New Testaments?!***

Doubtless, some will reply, “It is the same logic that allowed Jesus to ‘type’ John the Baptist as ‘Elijah.’” YES, BUT, Jesus added, ***“If ye are able to receive it...,”*** clearly offering John as a *type*.

John the Baptist died. ***If John is a “type” of Elijah, then when does Elijah die?!*** If the Baptist was “Elijah [Elias] which was to come,” ***then how did “not-dead-yet” Elijah appear (in person) shortly after John’s death?*** Following the Baptist’s death, according to Scripture, both Moses and Elijah appeared ***alive*** on the Mount of Transfiguration. Elijah was taken alive to Heaven in the Old Testament. How was he beheaded in the person of John and ***yet alive afterward*** on the Mount of Transfiguration? *What is the reasoning here?*

As to the time granted the **Two Witnesses** to prophesy, both books, Daniel 7:25; Revelation 11:3; 12:6, 14; 13:5, are in agreement—“one thousand two hundred sixty days” are equated with “time, times and an half” and “forty and two months.” Each of these *time expressions* is clearly derived from the “no rain for 3+ years predicted by the Old Testament Prophet Elijah.” See 1 Kings 17:1; 18:1.

Note: Neither John’s appearance at the Jordan or Elijah’s appearance on the Mountain fulfilled (*filled-full*) this Scripture:

“I will send you Elijah the prophet **before the coming of the great and dreadful day** of the Lord.”

Malachi 4:5

If as reasoned above, Elijah repeatedly appears, then it is reasonable to assume HE CAN AND WILL APPEAR ONCE AGAIN!

When Jesus came to Earth the first time, Old Testament prophecies regarding a suffering Messiah were *literally fulfilled*. He was born in Bethlehem; He was led to slaughter; He did make His grave with the wicked and with the rich, *and on, and on...* For years I have urged my listeners to *first* read and apply Scripture *literally*. After that, parallels, types, shadows, applications and less than literal interpretations may or may not apply.

A final observation: If the **Two Witnesses**, according to Revelation chapter 11, are to preach during the same time period allotted to the End-time Beast System, *then the Old and New Testaments have not been preaching for 2,000 years and will preach only 3½ years at “the time of the end.”* Personally, I find it difficult to understand how the Old and New Testaments will be “murdered, resurrected and caught up to Heaven in a cloud” after preaching for 42 months...

More about The Two Witnesses

“Search the Scriptures . . . they are they which testify of me.” John 5:39. Have you ever paused to consider these words from Jesus? If not, then please take a few moments with me to consider His command. Jesus arrived c. 1,500 years after Moses and the Exodus. For nearly 1,500 years, the Jews possessed Old Testament Scripture—*the Scripture Jesus is here referencing*. Even a casual reading of the Gospels will show that few, very few, of those favored with Scripture recognized Jesus within that Scripture! Yet Jesus declared, **“If you will search Scripture, you will find me—I am there!”**

At the personal level, I cannot disparage those chosen people for failing to recognize the Son of Promise. After all, 1,500 years can muddy the water, introduce a multitude of rabbinic interpretations; and after waiting a millennium and a half, who could even suspect Messiah would finally appear?! And yet, Jesus words constitute a veiled command: **“Find me, if you will—I am in The Book.”**

It would take decades for me to grasp Jesus’ words; I needed years of reading, pondering and seeking to discover Jesus in virtually every *story* in the Book. I found Him in the usual and customary places, but about 30 years ago I began a new reading of “people stories” within Old Testament Scripture. Like a solitary candle at midnight, I began to find Jesus virtually everywhere I turned to look. There was the obvious Joseph; but who has read the Book of Job and discovered His *other* identity? How many have read the story of Sampson and substituted Jesus as Sampson in that seamy story? In the New Testament, have you discovered Jesus as the Prodigal Son? Jesus appears in the most awkward and unusual places when one carefully “searches the Scriptures.”

Several years ago I offered a study entitled, *Abraham, Isaac and Jacob*. I became fascinated with the Hebrew meanings of their

personal names but it was a deeper investigation of key words and place names that opened my eyes to a larger, virtually unseen revelation of God within Scripture. I found the Father telling His personal story and the painful story of His [Divine] Son. Since offering that study, I have received countless encouraging comments from laypersons saying, “This Study has opened my eyes to a new and deeper appreciation of Scripture!” Beyond those lay responses, I have been deeply gratified by responses from ministers of various faiths who, by phone or email, expressed sincere appreciation for the Study, some even asking if they could preach the sermon and give me credit. My response: “The Study is not mine, it is God’s—*it is Scripture*—it belongs to all of us; you owe me nothing.”

That Study propelled me into an ever deeper searching for God—the hidden Father and Son telling us their story through the lives of people and their experiences recorded for us in Scripture;

“For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.” - Romans 15:4.

I was not the first to recognize Moses as a type of Christ:

“The man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth.” - Numbers 12:3.

Moses—a helpless child miraculously spared from the evil king who would extinguish his life.

Moses—a man of flesh, called to the “burning bush” without sandals, “nest, den or where to lay his head.”

Moses—a Saviour calling his people out of slavery and bondage to sin; leading them to the Promised Land.

Moses as a type of Jesus—*but what about Elijah?* The Jesus that will return in glory and splendor—will He be the meek Moses or will He be the bold, sword-wielding Elijah? *The answer is yes!*

Elijah, bold and fearless, arriving at the end of **3½ years** to confront evil king(s) and arrogant Jezebel, declaring, “I sit a queen and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow.” Revelation 18:7. Moses is a type of the meek and lowly flesh-man Jesus—Elijah types Michael the Divine Son!

The bread and water in the wilderness, Jesus said, represented Him. The fiery presence that warmed the desert cold at night and the cloud that led His people by day represented Jesus; so did Joshua; so did Isaac; so did Jacob; so did David; so did Jonathan; so did Joseph; so did Benjamin; *so do Moses and Elijah!* So, so, so . . .

Jesus will not return until He, as our perfect Saviour, has exhausted every effort, making a last entreaty and delivering stern warning. With meekness and parental love He will plead through Moses with “every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people,” “begging all who will to follow Him to the Kingdom of Promise!” Through Elijah He will boldly demand repentance and obedience to God’s commands, at last placing His foot upon “the necks of His enemies.”

“The Scripture cannot be broken.” I believe the **Two Witnesses** will return in the flesh—*Elijah* representing our Old Testament Warrior Prince, “Michael,” yet our New Testament, fearless-in-Judgment, “Lion of the Tribe of Judah”—*Moses* representing Jesus, our Old Testament / New Testament meek, lowly “Lamb as it had been slain!”

A failure to recognize Moses and Elijah as God’s promised **Two Witnesses** for the last days is to *miss* the hidden Jesus in Scripture.

Post Script

At the personal level, I have satisfied my own curiosity surrounding the return of Moses and Elijah. I have found numerous references to their promised return, their mighty preaching, their deaths and their resurrection! These consistent references to the return of God's appointed **Two Witnesses** are found in Daniel chapters 7 and 8 as well as Revelation chapters 11, 12, 13 and 14:

My Two Witnesses

Daniel	7:7—“stamped <i>the residue</i> ”
	7:19—“stamped <i>the residue</i> ”
	7:21—“made war with <i>the saints</i> ”
	7:25—“wear out <i>the saints</i> ”
	8:10—“cast down some of <i>the host (stars)</i> ”
	8:12—“and (the) <i>host</i> was given over”
	8:13—“the <i>host</i> to be trodden under foot”
	8:24—“shall destroy <i>the mighty</i> and <i>the holy people</i> ”

Revelation	11:3—“my <i>two witnesses</i> ”
	11:4—“these are <i>the two olive trees</i> and “ <i>the two candlesticks</i> ”
	11:6-12—“ <i>these; they; them; their</i> ”
	11:10—“these <i>two prophets</i> ”
	12:17—“ <i>the remnant</i> ”
	13:7—“war with <i>the Saints</i> ”
	14:12, 13—“ <i>the blessed dead</i> ” whose “ <i>works do follow them</i> ”

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