

Some End Times Questions (Part 3)

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[0:00] Okay, well tonight I'm going to answer, well I guess two questions related to end times and the first one I'm not going to spend any time on hardly and I didn't even put them in your notes.

! Do you believe we're living in the end times or something similar to that? And the answer to the question is yes, yes we are.

And I would say yes we are in the same sense, first of all in the same sense that the apostles and Paul were living in the end times.

That in that sense the end times began at the birth of the church. And we've been living for now two thousand plus years at the end of the age.

That's not a real good answer to the question because I understand the spirit of the question is. And it is that are we going to see Jesus in our lifetime? Are we living at that end?

[1:23] And the answer to that question is I don't know. I don't know. The signs, though we're not as the church looking for signs. And no signs have been given to us really.

We can't see some of the birth pains. And we are seeing those. And so we could be encouraged by that and be able to say that we are nearer now than yesterday.

Yeah, that's right. But I guess I have tended toward de-emphasizing or maybe controlling my thoughts about trying to determine whether or not we're living at that, the end of the end times.

Because it's a distraction sometimes, quite frankly, to get caught up in thoughts of it.

And maybe our thoughts should be confined to this, the same thought that John, who wrote the book of Revelation, closed his book of Revelation with. And that is even so. Lord, come.

[2:33] And I think the spirit of it has come quickly. And if he felt that way then, then we ought to feel that way now. And certainly, the time of his coming is closer now than it was when John wrote those words.

So we could be encouraged about it. But we need to keep working. And keep our focus on the primary thing God has called us to do.

And that is to proclaim the gospel of the kingdom, the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ to the world.

And when he's ready to come or the time appointed for him to come, he will come without delay.

And so we need to be ready. And as much as God is pleased to use us in, we ought to strive to get others ready.

So that's the answer to that question. The question I want to focus on tonight, though, pertains to the two witnesses mentioned in Revelation 11.10. You see the question there, and it's presented there just exactly the way it was put on the sheet of paper that I received.

[3:37] Who are the two witnesses mentioned in Revelation 11, chapter 11, verse 10? Now, the focal passage, and we'll get to it here in a minute, is Revelation 11, chapter 11, verses 3 through 13, is the primary text that deals or introduces for us and reveals the ministry of the, quote, two witnesses, as it appears in Scripture.

But instead of starting there, I would prefer to start with Matthew 24.14. And so why don't you look there first? And there's a reason why, and I'll explain, and maybe it's already apparent to you if you've looked ahead in your notes.

But in chapter 24, verse 14, Jesus, I think, speaking of the end of the age, because that was the question the disciples had on their minds, and he states there in verse 14, and this gospel of the kingdom will be preached to all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.

Now, in my view, my eschatology, I believe that that will be fulfilled at the end of the tribulation. I believe it will be fulfilled then, that it's not a statement from Jesus, a condition given by Jesus, something that must be met before the rapture of the church.

Some have come to that conclusion. In my view, I believe it is at the absolute end of the age when Christ will come and establish his kingdom. And so when is that going to happen, and how will that come about?

[5:24] And so that's why I want to start with the question of witnesses, not just the two witnesses, but the witnesses during the seven-year tribulation, because there will be quite a number, and I've listed them for you here.

And there are six in all, but they involve, these witnesses involve, innumerable number of people, and all that's going to take place during the tribulation.

And so just a couple of points there, and I may have given these to you, I don't remember. If not, you can jot them down. But as a testimony of God's redeeming grace, the gospel will be proclaimed during the seven years of tribulation, in my view.

And you may have a different view. There are those who have a different view of end times or eschatology, and do not believe, in their view, that anyone will even have the opportunity to be saved during the tribulation.

And therefore, no one will be saved during the tribulation. And so at the rapture of the church, that's, you know, or, well, not the rapture of the church, they wouldn't see it there, but, well, let me just leave it there.

[6:38] No salvation during the tribulation, but I don't think that's true. And so I think the gospel, I believe, according to Scripture, the gospel will continue to be preached all the way to the very end before Christ comes in all of His glory and establishes His kingdom.

As a result, then, many will be saved during the tribulation, and God will have, and we can identify, I think, from Scripture, powerful witnesses of the gospel during the tribulation.

And I've given you six of them here. The first one is, well, we could say the whole of Scripture, but specifically John's revelation. If you would look there, Revelation 1, chapter 1, starting with verse 1, John wrote, the revelation of Jesus Christ, that's what this is, revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants things which must shortly take place, and He sent and signified it by His angel to His servant John, who's the author of the revelation, who, this is John, who bore witness to the Word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ to all things that He saw, blessed is He who reads, and those who hear the words of this prophecy and keep those things which are written in it for the time is near.

Now, the book of Revelation, the vast majority of it, I think all of it, but maybe the first four chapters, first three chapters, rather, deal with a period of God's judgment or Jacob's trouble or the tribulation, including the great tribulation.

And so, even though we ought to read it now, and He's not saying that this isn't for us in the sense that we shouldn't read it, but primarily the idea is that those who are living in the tribulation will have this revelation, and they need to read it, and they'll be blessed if they will.

[8:51] And so, it then stands, will stand, as a very powerful witness during the tribulation period. Secondly, the 144,000 Jewish evangelists in Revelation 7, 4, and also in chapter 14, verse 3, and just to give you the chapter 7, verse 4 reference, then I heard the number of those who were sealed, 144,000 from all the tribes of Israel.

So, there are going to be 144,000 Israelites or Jews, and we don't have time to delve into all that the Bible says about them, but I believe they're going to be evangelists and going to be preaching the gospel to Jews and Gentiles, and as a result, a whole bunch of folks are going to get saved. In fact, the Bible describes them as, and this is the third set of witnesses, innumerable Gentile believers. Now, if they're Gentile believers, they're believers, then they're going to be giving testimony of their faith.

They're going to be witnesses. So, I would classify them as a huge number of witnesses to the gospel. In Revelation 7, 9, after these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues.

Translation, that is speaking of the Gentile nations, specifically. standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes with palm branches in their hands.

[10:25] And I take the view that these are Gentiles who were saved during the tribulation as a result of God's grace, but through the preaching of the gospel by 144,000 Jewish evangelists, and so many were saved that they were not countable.

So many. Alright, so there's the third witness. The fourth one would be the two witnesses. And I'm kind of taking these in what I believe will be a chronological order of how it kind of will unfold. And so, fourth on the list will be the two witnesses, and I'll reserve talking about them until a little bit later. Then the fifth one will be the entire nation of Israel.

Because at some point in the tribulation period, toward the end of it, I believe, and I think primarily as a result of these two witnesses, all Israel will be saved.

That is, all those who are living at the time. And we get that from Romans 11, verses 25 to 28. In fact, let me just read it to you real quickly.

[11:35] Romans 11, 25 says, For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion.

What's the mystery? Well, it's the next thing he says. The blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. That's the mystery. I don't want you to be ignorant of this mystery.

That God's chosen people are ignorant. That they can't see it. And they can't see it until the time of the Gentiles is complete.

And so, all Israel will be saved as it is written, the Deliverer will come out of Zion and he will turn away ungodliness from Jacob. For this is my covenant with them when I take away their sins.

Now, I hold the position that this is going to happen at the end of the Tribulation. And it's going to be as a result, I believe, directly as a result of these two witnesses. And we'll see them a little bit later.

[12:32] But at that time, all Israel will be saved. Now, that's after the fullness of the Gentiles. All the Gentiles come into the kingdom. And then all Israel will be saved.

And then the sixth one is rather interesting. We don't have time to... We're not going to take the time to delve into this. But an angel flying in the sky preaching the everlasting gospel. Revelation 14.6 where John says, And I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to those who dwell on the earth, to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people.

There's another, I think, reference to the Gentile nation. Saying with a loud voice, Fear God and give glory to Him for the hour of His judgment has come.

And worship Him who made heaven and earth and sea and springs of water and so forth. And I think that will mark the final gospel invitation.

And it will be an unprecedented worldwide declaration of the gospel after which the opportunity for salvation will be over.

[13:41] And then the end shall come. And so then you have the fulfillment of what Jesus said in Matthew 24.14. The gospel will be proclaimed to all the nations and then the end will come.

So, I'll just put all those together in that way. Now, some have said, by the way, or have speculated that this angel is really a satellite in proclaiming the gospel to the world.

But I would rather take it literally and I believe it will be an angel that will proclaim it in some way.

But anyway. Alright, now let's move to what the Bible says about God's two witnesses in Revelation 11.

Chapter 11. And let me just read the text. It's pretty easy to figure out what he's saying here. Get a sticky note off the page there.

Alright, now. Starting with verse 3. And I will give power to my two witnesses. And they will prophesy 1,260 days clothed in sackcloth.

[14:51] These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands standing before the God of the earth. 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. I mean, it must happen this way. 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. When they finish their testimony, the beast that ascends out of the bottomless pit will make war against them, overcome them, and kill them.

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. So we know where that place is, Jerusalem.

Then those from the peoples, tribes, tongues, and nations, that's Gentile nations again, will see their dead bodies three and a half days and not allow their dead bodies to be put into graves.

[15:59] And those who dwell on the earth will rejoice over them, make merry, and send gifts to one another because these two prophets tormented those who dwell on the earth. Shame on them for doing that. Now, after the three and a half days, the breath of life from God entered them and they stood on their feet 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. In the same hour, there was a great earthquake and a tenth of the city fell.

Speaking of its buildings, a tenth of the city fell. In the earthquake, seven thousand people were killed and the rest were afraid and gave glory to the God of heaven.

I believe that's the reference to all Israel being saved. But anyway. The second woe is past. Behold, the third woe is coming quickly. 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.

And that's a reference to the Millennial Kingdom. Alright? So, now let's think about what the Bible is telling us here or identifying for us about these two witnesses.

[17:16] And since the question, the original question, pertains to their identity, I think that's what I understand the question to be. Who were they? We'll save that one for last. So let me begin with, first of all, the mission.

The mission of the two witnesses. What's their mission? God has sent them, raised them up, given them all this power that they have. And so what's their mission? Well, it tells us here in verse 3 it was to prophesy.

Now what are we to understand about the word prophesy? Well, they're not foretelling. It's not like an Old Testament prophet who's telling the people things to come in that sense except that they are going to be preaching the imminent judgment that's coming.

But this is a message that's already been revealed. So they're not prophesying or foretelling what they're doing is preaching. Right?

I think that's pretty clear. So it's not foretelling but forth telling. They're preaching and what are they preaching? Well, the Bible doesn't tell us. The Bible does not detail the content of their preaching.

[18:30] And now, we can, I think, discover or we could probably guess what they're preaching but we could also discover I think pretty closely by just considering their clothing.

For one thing, the clothing was a sign of their message. verse 3 it says here what they were wearing. What was it?

Clothed in sackcloth. And this sackcloth, number one, was something that would associate mourning and humility but not only that.

they were clothed in it and so it would also signify something of their message and that would be that they are clothed in the same way that, for example, John the Baptist was clothed and Elijah.

Now, these two men were prophets and what was their primary message? The message of repentance and imminent judgment. So, that's why I put on your notes there we can compare the ministries of Elijah 2 Kings 1.8 and John the Baptist Matthew 3.4 with that of these two witnesses.

[19:59] They all preached in a time of apostasy. They preached a message of imminent judgment. I mean, here it's coming, it's coming.

The judgment's coming. Repentance and the urgency to be prepared for Christ's coming. That, I think, is safe to say that's what their message was.

Like John the Baptist, repent for the kingdom of God is at hand. That was his message. And I believe that was their message. Now, they did preach the gospel of the kingdom.

And we know that because Jesus said the gospel of the kingdom would be preached during this time period, Matthew 24.14. All right, so they're preaching the gospel. But it's a message that is primarily issued toward the Jews because these two men were Jews.

I think it's clear. And it's a message of, again, if I might just reiterate it, a message of imminent judgment. The kingdom of God is at hand.

[21:04] This is what John preached. What we preach, in a sense. That's part of the gospel. You remember when Paul preached to, was the king Agrippa?

And I always get confused whether it's Agrippa or Felix. I think it's Agrippa. And he reasoned with him of righteousness and self-control and the judgment to come.

And it struck fear in that ruler's heart. That's the message. So they preached the gospel of the kingdom. That's the mission. Secondly, the duration of their witness.

The Bible says in verse 3 that they preached for 1,260 days. That would be 1,260 days.

And that would be three and a half years. Three and a half years. Now that's a significant number in regard to the tribulation period.

[22:05] or so, we could say that they preached certainly they preached during the tribulation. That much is clear.

It's certainly clear from Scripture, if we take it literally, and I think it intends to be literal here, that they preached for three and a half years. But which three and a half years did they preach? there's where some disagreement exists among scholars. But to me, I think it's pretty clear that they preached during the last half of the seven years tribulation, or commonly called the great tribulation. And how do we know this? Well, for one thing, I think we know it from the chronological order of John's revelation. tribulation, it just seems to, you know, in the order, you can't put this period of time early in the tribulation, you must put it at the end of it.

The end be there, the end of their witness coincides with the blowing of the seventh trumpet. We see that in verse 15. The seventh trumpet.

[23:23] So, if we can just kind of put it all together here, they preached for that three and a half years during the seal and trumpet judgments, they came the last half of the tribulation.

After their resurrection, which we read about here in chapter 11, after the resurrection and their translation to heaven or rapture to heaven, after that happens, the seventh trumpet blows.

Alright? So, that puts it at the end of the tribulation. And then, after the seventh trumpet is blown, you have the seven bowl judgments unfolding very quickly, rapidly, and you have the Lord's coming and His quick victory against the armies of Antichrist.

And then, the next recorded event we have in the chapter is the millennial kingdom. So, that puts it at the last half of the tribulation period, for whatever that's worth to you.

Alright? Third, the possession of the two witnesses. What did they possess other than the message? Well, they apparently possessed something quite unique.

[24:41] The Bible says in verse 3, I will give power to my two witnesses. That can be authority, and yet, when we read further, we understand that what they were given was indeed a supernatural power.

So, they possessed that for purposes of preaching. Well, I think for a number of purposes, and I think I've listed these for you. Their power, the power God granted them, enabled them to reach the world with their message.

Well, let's just look, before I go too far, let's look there at what it says about their power. Verse 3, I will give power to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy, verse 9, no, not verse 9, alright, here, verse 5, and if anyone wants to harm them, fire proceeds from their mouth and devours their enemies.

That's some kind of power, isn't it? You know, here they are, I can just kind of visualize this, you know, they're preaching, and here comes a group of unconverted Gentiles that don't want to hear any kind of message about repentance and judgment, and they've decided we're just going to take care of these guys, we're going to take them out, and so they come at them and suddenly fire comes out of their mouths and just consumes them.

You know, I don't leave. Yeah, yeah. Too late now. By the way, a certain kind power I have on occasion wished I had, but no, not actually.

[26:25] All right, so they've got this power, and let me read on because I want to make a point here. It proceeds out of the mouth and devours their enemies, and if anyone wants to harm them, even wants to, they must die.

They must die. That's just the law. That's God's law. It's going to happen. And they also have the power to shut up heaven, no rainfalls for days, for the days of their prophecy.

That's three and a half years. And so you can understand why maybe some people would be a little bit ticked off with these guys, you know, because all their crops are failing, and it's because these two witnesses have shut up the heavens, so it's not raining.

And so I guess the solution is to get rid of them. So you can understand why people would be upset, not only from the message they're preaching, but from the manifestations of their power.

And not only that, but the water that does remain, apparently, is turned to blood. And now we don't know for sure if these manifestations of their power, these miracles occurred, were wide, or where they were preaching.

[27 : 35] I think were wide. And because I think they were preaching in one particular geographical location, I think, their pulpit was in Jerusalem. But anyway, so they're able to do that and then strike the earth with plagues as often as they desire, just whenever they wanted to do it.

So there's the power, tremendous power. Now I'm suggesting to you that, first of all, that that power enabled them to reach a huge audience with their message.

And how could that be? I mean, they're just a couple of guys, and they can't be everywhere at the same time. And so how could their message reach so many people?

Well, their message was able to reach so many people because number one, they performed these horrendous supernatural miracles. miracles. And it says in verse 9 that the nations will see.

Now, in verse 9, it's a reference to their dead bodies. But I think the implication is that while they're preaching and some of these manifestations, the supernatural abilities they have, the nations will see those things too.

[28 : 56] And how would they be able to see those things? CNN. CNN. Yeah, that's good. CNN and all the other major networks. Can you imagine? If today a couple of guys appeared on the scene who were preaching repentance and judgment, and that's all there was to it, well, they wouldn't get any news coverage at all, wouldn't they?

I mean, because there are preachers today preaching that. Hopefully. Hopefully your pastor is one of those. But I haven't had CNN coming by here at the church or coming into our worship service to film me preaching the gospel.

But I guarantee you if I had someone come in to rebel or try to shut me up and fire came out of my mouth and devoured them, well, CNN would be down here in a heartbeat and find out what's going on.

And if this kind of thing kept happening, they'd be following me around. And the whole world will not only see these manifestations, but also hear their message.

So I say that this power is given them and it enabled them to reach a world with a message.

Secondly, the power verified to the world that God had sent them. in fact, I think that is the case primarily with the miracles we have recorded for us in the Gospels and in the New Testament.

[30 : 31] They were not miracles per se just to meet a need at the time. Not miracles to wow people. You know, they were miracles to verify.

verify the validity of the one performing the miracle and not just him, but his message. And then when God's word was complete, I believe those sign miracles ceased.

There's no need for that anymore to verify that we have God's word. But this certainly verified to the world that God had sent them. And it says there in verse 33 that he said that they are my witnesses. My witnesses. Thirdly, their power allowed them to continue preaching their message. Because they were invincible.

You know, nobody was going to stop them. Nobody could stop them. At least not for the allotted period of time that God had set.

[31 : 39] They were going to preach for three and a half years. And during that three and a half years, they were invincible because God did not want their preaching to stop. So that power certainly enabled them to do that.

And they could not be stopped in spite of those who violently hated them for preaching repentance and judgment. And in addition to that, in spite of the, I think if I understand, scripture, and I take it literally that during this period of time, there are going to be millions of demons roaming this world as well.

And not only killing people, but also like a scorpion stinging. And in spite of the Antichrist as well, his presence and his influence and rule, he couldn't stop them, at least not during the three and a half year period.

And also in spite of his armies, you know, don't you think that the Antichrist could have marshaled a few regiments of his army, you know, to go against these two guys, but they were invincible.

And also I would say they were able to continue to preach in spite of all of the cataclysmic events that were taking place around this globe as a result of God's judgment being poured out upon the earth.

[33:05] So, all right, so their possession. Fourth, the destruction, the destruction of the two witnesses. The beast will kill them.

That's what said in verse 7. When they finish their testimony, three and a half years is up, the beast that ascends out of the bottomless pit is, I think, literally his power, the source of power.

This is the antichrist, his source of power. He's just a mortal man, but his source of power comes from the pit. He will make war against them, overcome them, and kill them.

And their dead bodies will lie in the street of the great city which spiritually is called Sodom in Egypt, primarily because of its wickedness and unbelief, where also our Lord was crucified.

So this is Jerusalem. So they're going to be killed at that time after they're finished, the three and a half years. Number five, the celebration over the death of the two witnesses.

[34:15] Verses nine and ten, they're just going to have a big party. I don't need to read that again. And again, I think through satellite technology, the whole world is going to be able to see these witnesses' dead bodies lying there.

They're going to be lying there for three and a half days. And they're going to start to decay. And I think we could, again, imagine the wall-to-wall coverage that will be given to that.

CNN will be there, Fox News, and all the other major networks. And so for three and a half years, the world is going to watch their bodies decay out there.

and for three and a half years, the unconverted world is going to celebrate. It's going to be a big party. In fact, it's really kind of interesting when you think about it.

It says not only that they were going to rejoice and make merry, but they're going to exchange gifts. Now, does that strike you as kind of strange?

[35:18] I think one commentator I read, it may have been MacArthur, he thinking about the exchange of gifts, gifts, I guess they're just going to make a holiday, it's Happy Dead Witness Day.

So we're going to get together and have white elephant gift exchanges and things like that to celebrate their death. I don't know. All right, then sixth, the resurrection of the two witnesses. The Bible says in verse 11, they stood on their feet.

Now, can you imagine that? After three and a half days. And, you know, I can kind of imagine that maybe there's a reporter standing there.

from CNN. I'll just pick on CNN. Because all the Fox News guys are going to be gone. Well, if they're gone, they'll all be raptured. Right. But anyway, here's this reporter.

He's got a microphone and the cameraman's there and they're showing the dead bodies. I can't, you know, I just kind of imagine it. And so here they are, these two dead preachers who were so dogmatic and there they are, they're dead.

[36:19] Just look at them, they're lying dead. And then he said, wait, wait a minute, something's happening. He says, something's happening, ladies and gentlemen. These two guys are, well, I can't believe it, they're standing up.

Can you imagine that? And everybody's going to see this. Everybody's going to be watching. Well, if they don't watch it actually happen, they're going to see reruns of it over and over again, but the whole world's going to see it and these guys come back to life.

And then, the translation of the two witnesses. They ascended to heaven in a cloud, verse 12. So we have the two witnesses being raptured, raptured up to heaven.

And they don't stop to preach anymore because the preaching's over. And, you know, someone might think, well, this would be a prime opportunity for them to get one more message, you know. people really believe that. But you remember when Jesus told the story about Lazarus and the rich man, and he said they won't believe even if someone raises from the dead.

[37:30] I think it's a reference directly to Jesus, but the same principle is true here. But anyway, time's up. They're not going to give any more gospel messages. And then we have the vindication of the two witnesses, a great earthquake, and 7,000 people die.

They're in verse 13. And why do I say vindication? I believe it's a vindication of their true identity, and therefore the truthfulness of their message.

And a whole lot of people are going to glorify God. I think it's maybe a reference to salvation. Their eyes will be opened. I think it's a reference to the Jews being saved.

Then we have the identification. That's where we need to get to. And boy, time is fleeting. Let me just give this to you real quickly.

Verse 4 tells us there, and I forgot to jot this in your notes, but verse 4, these are the two olive trees and the two lampstands standing before the God of the earth. And so there's your answer.

[38:36] Those are the two witnesses. Amen. Let's pray. No, I'm kidding. That doesn't help much, does it? That doesn't tell us who they are. It is a reference to Zechariah chapters 3 and 4.

You can jot that down. I forgot to give that to you. If you go to Zechariah chapter 3 and 4, it's a time when Israel is revived and kind of reinstated after their captivity.

And there were two men God used there. There was Joshua the high priest king and Zerubbabel. You try saying that.

The king. And God used them to revive and rebuild Israel. And so are these guys coming back to life? And so we have here the two witnesses, Joshua and Zerubbabel.

I don't think that's the point. The point is that what is happening now with these two witnesses, witnesses, what happened when Joshua the high priest and Zerubbabel were used by God to revive God's people.

[39:47] Because I think all Israel is saved from the witness of these two guys. And there are various views as to their identity.

And they basically fall into a couple of categories. There's those who opt for a symbolic interpretation of not just the two witnesses, but nearly everything in the book of Revelation.

And so there are two views there, the church. Two witnesses represent the church. And that view is primarily held by those who hold to a mid-tribulation rapture.

We don't have time to get into that. The other view, the symbolic view would be that the two witnesses are symbolic of the 144,000. So we're not to take the word two literally.

Two, the number two literally. That is just symbolic. The problem with that, some objections would be, number one, the number two I think ought to be taken literally because the other numbers in the text are clearly literal.

[40:52] So these are two guys. The witnesses die at the same time, and so if they're symbolic of the 144,000, then there was not a point in time when all 144,000 were put to death and resurrected.

So it doesn't fit there. And they would also represent the remnant of believers in the Bible. It clearly indicates that a remnant of believers will survive all the way to the end.

So that doesn't fit. So I don't think we ought to take the symbolic interpretation. The other would be literal interpretations, and there are two popular views there.

perhaps the most popular would be that the two witnesses were men who had lived previously, but now God has restored them to this ministry.

And the most popular view would be that the two witnesses are Elijah and Moses. Elijah and Moses. Elijah and Moses.

[42:01] And the support for Elijah would be that the prophecy that Elijah would come and prepare the way for the Messiah in Malachi chapter 3 and also in chapter 4.

And so that would be possible support for Elijah. Elijah, secondly, did not experience death. We know that from 2 Kings chapter 2 verse 9 and the following.

The power of the witnesses to stop rain corresponds with Elijah's ministry in 1 Kings 17. 1. Fifthly, Elijah was one of the two who appeared in the transfiguration.

So that's why some would say one of these witnesses would be Elijah. The support from Moses, some of them would be similar. Moses' power to turn water into blood, well it was God's power, but God used Moses to do that.

and also the plagues in Egypt might correspond with the power of these witnesses. Moses also appeared with Elijah at the transfiguration.

[43:11] The Bible according to one interpretation infers that Moses would reappear in the last days, Deuteronomy 18. Also, God may have, according to this view, may have preserved Moses' bodies so that he might present him again in the last days.

Remember, God buried Moses, so we don't know where his grave is. It doesn't say that Moses did not die. That's one major hitch in picking Moses here. But, anyway, overall, according to Scripture, two witnesses, that's why it's important that we have two witnesses, two witnesses!

confirm the truth of any testimony. And, you find that in a number of places in the Bible. Moses and Elijah are representatives of the law and the prophets.

And, so, they would represent the two best witnesses of Christ that God might send to his people, the Jews. And, Romans 3, 21, but now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed,

being witnessed by the law and the prophets, even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ all and on all that believe.

And, so, some would say, well, then, that would make sense in the mind of God. Have two witnesses to confirm the testimony of the gospel, and those two witnesses being the prime representatives of the law and the prophets, Moses and Elijah.

[44 : 44] Alright, another view would be that it would be Elijah and Enoch. and it's not greatly supported, but probably the best thing going for it would be that both Elijah and Enoch never saw death.

And so, God could bring them back. I guess he could do anything he wanted. And the other thing is that Enoch did preach judgment, just like Elijah.

So, their ministries were similar in that sense. The other view, and I'll just end with this, on the literal interpretation, would be that the two witnesses are literally men, just like the Bible says, but they cannot be identified.

Now, it's a neat thing, I'll just close with this thought, it's kind of a neat little package to put together that these guys would be Elijah and Moses.

And I have heard people argue strongly for that. But, the reality is, the Bible just doesn't tell us. And yeah, what does it really matter?

[45 : 58] The Bible doesn't say. So, I think I would opt that we don't know who they are. We'll find out one day. Thank you.