

The Two Witnesses

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[Bible prophecy](#) students have divergent opinions on the identity of two witnesses mentioned in Revelation 11:3. The diversity of opinion includes understanding that the two witnesses are Bible characters like Moses, Enoch, and Elijah or two literal end time prophets. Others think the two witnesses symbolize the Christian Church, Israel, believers in Christ, and the Old and New Testaments. An evaluation of the information that John gives us reveals four characteristics of the two witnesses that will help us identify who or what the two witnesses are. These include judicial process, God's use of personification, eternal nature of the two witnesses and the personification of the two witnesses in Revelation.

- **Judicial Process** - In Bible times, the testimony of two witnesses was required for applying the death penalty or other matters. (Deuteronomy 17:6; 2 Corinthians 13:1) In the end time story, two witnesses will be required to determine the ultimate destiny of each person on Earth.
- **God's Use of Personification** - In Revelation 11:4, God used a literary technique called personification which give inanimate objects human characteristics. In this reference, the objects were two olive trees and two lampstands which "stand before the Lord."
- **Eternal Nature** - The two witnesses provide external documentation regarding the status of God's created beings. They give an eternal standard to demonstrate that created beings are making decisions according to God's plan for His people. During Earth's history, they testify whether people are following God's will for their lives. No person will be saved or lost due the the testimony of only one witness.
- **Personification in Revelation** - The second use of personification relates to the two witnesses and is the source of much confusion. Revelation 11:3-12 gives the two witnesses enough human characteristics that Bible students often make the mistake that the two witnesses are two actual prophets. Personification occurs again when Revelation describes them as prophets and bodies lying in the street.

People misunderstand the two witnesses because Revelation makes it appear that the two witnesses are people. To learn about the two witnesses, we need to consider what they do instead of who they are. Let's take a look at what the Bible says about the two witnesses.

- They prophesy for 42 months
- They are two Olive Trees
- They are two Lampstands
- They stand before the Lord
- They destroy their enemies with fire
- They can stop the rain
- They can strike the Earth with plagues
- The beast from the abyss kills them
- They will lie in the street for 3 1/2 days
- God resurrects them and they terrify those who see them

- God calls them up to Heaven

The two witnesses provide direct testimony to the Father regarding everything they see. So, they must be in a position to observe every event that occurs throughout history and the future and provide a benchmark for measuring actions of created beings. Revelation 11:4 cites two olive trees and two lampstands as the two witnesses. The olive trees and lampstands in Revelation are a clear reference to Zechariah 4 which describes these items (Zechariah 2:2-3). Zechariah identifies the two olive trees as the Holy Spirit (Zechariah 4:6,14). Obviously, since the Holy Spirit is living within each heart, He can accurately testify about the life a human being has lived. The lampstands are the second witness and it is more challenging to identify this witness. However, the Bible does refer to God's law as being a witness. (Deuteronomy 31:19,26)

Once we understand that the two entities providing testimony before God are God's law (Matthew 22:37-38) and the Holy Spirit, we can identify the people who can fill this role. First, they have to be filled with the Holy Spirit and proclaim God's eternal laws of love. Then, they would need to be in a position to prophesy for 42 months, have Holy Spirit power, have enemies that rejoice when they are killed, be resurrected and called to Heaven. Previously in the book of Revelation, John describes these people as the [144,000](#). God's 144,000 servants will proclaim His laws and be filled with the Holy Spirit.

For a more detailed explanation of the two witnesses, go to this [LINK](#).