



Gordon Watts <gww1210@gmail.com>

End Times Q: identity of 2 witnesses in Rev 11:3

5 messages

Gordon Watts <gww1210@gmail.com>

Fri, Feb 10, 2023 at 10:44 PM

To: thelandandthebook@moody.edu

Cc: "Dr. Charlie Dyer" <charles.dyer@moody.edu>, Jon.Gauger@moody.edu

Bcc: "Gww1210@aol.com" <gww1210@aol.com>, Gordon Watts <gww1210@gmail.com>, "Gww12102002@yahoo.com"

<gww12102002@yahoo.com>, gordon <Gordon@contractwithamerica2.com>, Gordon Watts

<gordonwaynewatts@hotmail.com>, gordon@gordonwaynewatts.com, gordon@gordonwatts.com, Thirstforjustice777

<thirstforjustice777@gmail.com>, thirst4justice <thirst4justice@yahoo.com>, BobbyFWatts@gmail.com

Charlie, we all very much enjoyed your visit to Dr. Rydelnik's program last week, but I still have an u answered question, which is a more well-known end times question: Confusion on identity of 2 witnesses in Rev 11:3

VIEW A-CHURCHES: Are they the Christian & Jewish believers/ churches (Rev 11:4 identifies them as the 2 olive trees & candlesticks/ lampstands, which Rev 2:1 identifies as churches).

VIEW B-INDIVIDUALS: Or could this be literal people (some suggest Moses, Elijah, Enoch, etc), as implied by Zechariah 4:11-14, which identifies them as 2 two sons of oil, eg, 2 anointed ones.

(There's actually a View-C regarding symbolism like Old/ New Testaments, etc, but I consider this a minor theory, lacking Bible basis.)

Dr. Rydelnik often asks what WE think, and I think that both main interpretations, A & B, above, are correct, eg, dual fulfillment like how Ezekiel 28 refers to both a literal man, King of Tyre (Ez 28:1-2) AND the Lucifer/ the devil (Ez 28:13-14; cf: Is 14:12, Ez 28:16, Rev 12:7-9). But what do you think, Charlie?

Thanks. Gordon in Plant City FLORIDA via WKES 91.1

Sent from my mobile Gmail app///

Gordon Wayne Watts, editor-in-chief, The Register
www.GordonWayneWatts.com / www.GordonWatts.com

National Director,

CONTRACT WITH AMERICA: PART II(TM)

<https://ContractWithAmerica2.com>

BS, The Florida State University, double major with honours: Biological & Chemical Sciences

AS, United Electronics Institute, VALEDICTORIAN

* <https://GordonWatts.com/education>* <https://GordonWayneWatts.com/education>

2046 Pleasant Acre Drive

Plant City, FL 33801-2113

Home: (863) 687-6141 ; Cell: (863) 688-9880

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Charlie Dyer <charles.dyer@moody.edu>

Sat, Feb 11, 2023 at 12:34 PM

To: Gordon Watts <gww1210@gmail.com>

Gordon,

Thanks for the email! In terms of the two witnesses in Revelation 11, let me start by saying that I don't believe taking the account allegorically or symbolically is the proper approach to interpreting the passage or the book. All the details in the chapter point to literal future events. There will be a rebuilt temple in Jerusalem, and the 42 months of Gentile domination parallels the 1,260 days the two witnesses are said to prophesy. The reference to olive trees and lampstands is more likely a reference back to Zechariah 4 where similar imagery is used to refer to two specific individuals (Zerubbabel and Joshua the high priest) who were accomplishing God's will in rebuilding the temple following the Babylonian captivity. Revelation uses the same imagery to describe two future men of God who will be serving the Lord in Jerusalem.

We're not given their identity in Revelation 11. However, the specific deeds they perform make me suspect that they might be Moses and Elijah. I say that because they are said to be able to shut up the sky so it doesn't rain (like Elijah) and to turn water into blood and strike the earth with every kind of plague (like Moses). It's interesting that Satan and Michael the archangel disputed over Moses' body following his death (Jude 9), and Elijah was physically transported into heaven without dying (2 Kings 2:11–12). But it's also possible Revelation 11 is describing future individuals who will come in the power of Moses and Elijah, even if they are not the actual individuals. The Old Testament ends in Malachi 4 with the prophet describing the coming of the "great and dreadful day of the LORD." And in that section he calls on the people of that day to "remember the law of my servant Moses" (4:4) and to watch for the coming of "the prophet Elijah" (4:5). Two witnesses—Moses and Elijah—who point the people back to God's Word and forward to God's return.

Anyway, I write all that to say I believe if we take such passages literally rather than figuratively or symbolically we are on far more solid interpretive ground. We still don't have all the answers, but this does help us allow Scripture to fit together rather than trying to force the puzzle pieces into the wrong slots!

I hope this is helpful!

Charie



Dr. Charlie Dyer

Professor-at-Large of Bible | Host: *The Land and the Book* radio program

820 N. LaSalle Blvd., Chicago, IL 60610

thelandandthebook.org

From: Gordon Watts <gww1210@gmail.com>
Date: Friday, February 10, 2023 at 8:45 PM
To: thelandandthebook <thelandandthebook@moody.edu>
Cc: Charles Dyer <charles.dyer@moody.edu>, Jon Gauger <jon.gauger@moody.edu>
Subject: End Times Q: identity of 2 witnesses in Rev 11:3

Moody ITS Alert: This email is from an external source. Please exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking on links, or replying to the sender.

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Gordon Watts <gww1210@gmail.com> Sat, Feb 11, 2023 at 1:59 PM
To: Charlie Dyer <charles.dyer@moody.edu>
Cc: Jon.Gauger@moody.edu, thelandandthebook@moody.edu, "Gww1210@aol.com" <gww1210@aol.com>, Gordon Watts <gww1210@gmail.com>
Bcc: gordon <Gordon@contractwithamerica2.com>, "Gww12102002@yahoo.com" <gww12102002@yahoo.com>, BobbyFWatts@gmail.com, gordon@gordonwaynewatts.com, gordon@gordonwatts.com

Hello, Charlie. It's so nice to hear from you again.

Yes, I lean strongly in favour of a literal hermeneutics exegesis (is that the right terminology?), when possible--just as the old saying says: **"When the plain sense of Scripture makes common sense, seek no other sense, lest it result in nonsense."**

Also, you're right that much of Revelation is literal. (Context.) That said, I can't dispute a symbolic interpretation of church as incorrect, especially given that "Scripture interpreting Scripture" and "other context" of close-by passage has a tempting argument when considering Rev. 2:1 calls 7 churches the 7 candlesticks or lampstands. The church's could be witnesses. (Of course, would this be 2 more churches besides the original 7 in Revelation chapters 2 and 3?) I, too, don't have a sure answer here, just a few well-thought guesses.

But I think an equal (or greater) consideration here is that we remember that while, obviously, all Scripture is important, nonetheless, if we "get it wrong" on this interpretation, it's thankfully not something on which our salvation depends, and this being the case, it's always good to keep things in perspective as in "keeping the main things the main things." Also, while it's also possible (tho not likely) that we'd have a disagreement on some point of theology, these academic points are always a good exercise in diplomatic communication skills as an ambassador for Jesus, or, as Dr. Rydelnik might put it: He doesn't believe in speaking in tongues in this dispensation, but makes it a point to never have anger or argument with a brother or sister in The Lord over non-essential matters, where salvation is likely not impacted by someone "going south" in a particular point.

A healthy balance of academic curiosity between the extremes is a good indication of self-control and Godly love for our brothers.

Anyhow, I didn't add much to the discussion, but I just wanted to acknowledge your good reply with a few more details. It's nice to hear from you again. Take care.

Gordon

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Jon Gauger <jon.gauger@moody.edu>
To: Gordon Watts <gww1210@gmail.com>

Wed, Feb 15, 2023 at 5:56 PM

Hi, Gordon--

Thanks so much for your enthusiasm and kind comments for ***The Land and the Book***.

We're grateful you took the time to write and enter our "Commentary Kickstart" contest.

It's been a blast!

As usual, we wish we had a set of books to give every listener who writes and enters.

But unfortunately, we can't quite do that.

We sure hope you'll stay listening to ***The Land and the Book***, because we've got some great programs coming up. For example:

March 18, Finding Jesus in the Pain

We'll learn how the sufferings of Job can actually bring us comfort in our own hurts and trials.

March 25, I Found the Truth

Mike, a former Muslim, shares his remarkable journey out of Islam.

April 1, The Characters of Easter

We meet fearful fishermen, despised tax collectors, marginalized women, feeble politicians, and traitorous friends—the characters of Easter.

April 8, The Agony of Jesus

We interview a medical doctor about the physical sufferings of Christ.

As you can see, we're excited for what's coming up—and hope you are, too!

For ***The Land and the Book*** team,

Jon Gauger

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Moody Radio

Author, Kids Say the Wisest Things



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Gordon Watts <gww1210@gmail.com>

Wed, Feb 15, 2023 at 7:47 PM

To: Jon Gauger <jon.gauger@moody.edu>

Cc: "Dr. Charlie Dyer" <charles.dyer@moody.edu>, thelandandthebook@moody.edu, "Gww1210@aol.com" <gww1210@aol.com>, Gordon Watts <gww1210@gmail.com>, gordon <Gordon@contractwithamerica2.com>

That's OK. But thanks for your efforts. With limited books available, you can only help so many, and, as you recall from my prior email, mom's a hoarder, so I'll be ok with online books and programs, and pass on the hard copies.

Thank you for writing back, Jon.

We all participate in various ministries and projects, and besides your radio program, your occasional email replies and your online resources are helpful.

I hope that my online resources are helpful in addressing many diverse topics on my online newspapers.

On a personal note, I will add something that I haven't previously said, but since I'm not great at distinguished voices until I become familiar with a radio host (even THEN I'm not great), it helps me that Charlie has a very slight stutter, *and I can tell it's him, not you, when I occasionally listen to your radio program.*

Of course, I certainly don't mean any insult, Jon, and it's so slight that I'm not sure most would notice, but just in case anyone else has noticed (Mel Tillis, a famous singer, was famous for stuttering real bad when not singing, just for context), anyhow, just in case anyone else noticed, that's my take on it.

I wasn't planning on saying anything as it might accidentally be offensive, but you all know me well enough now to know I have no desire to insult anyone, friend or enemy. Also, this is an example of how the differences and variety in God's creation are good.

Anyhow, I didn't mean to be so talkative. Have a good evening, and than you both, once again, for your program. Should you need a reference, you may cite me as a happy listener and forward my email... let's hope things aren't so bad you'd have to do that... but, if needed, you MAY drop my name. :)

Sent from my mobile Gmail app///

Gordon Wayne Watts, editor-in-chief, The Register
www.GordonWayneWatts.com / www.GordonWatts.com

National Director,
 CONTRACT WITH AMERICA: PART II(TM)
<https://ContractWithAmerica2.com>

BS, The Florida State University, double major with honours: Biological & Chemical Sciences
 AS, United Electronics Institute, VALEDICTORIAN

* <https://GordonWatts.com/education>
 * <https://GordonWayneWatts.com/education>
 2046 Pleasant Acre Drive

Plant City, FL 33801-2113
 Home: (863) 687-6141 ; Cell: (863) 688-9880

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