

EP86 Revelation 11 verses 5-6

In our last podcast, we explored both the identity and purpose of these two witnesses as communicated in the image of the two olive trees and the two lampstands that have been standing before the Adonai (the Lord) of all the earth. We discovered that these two witnesses are distinct in **identity** (the Jew being a natural olive branch and the Gentile being a wild olive branch), but unified in **purpose**, as both lampstands shine the light of life into the darkness through their prophetic message.

With that, let's pick up in verse **5** and we will explore the power they have been given.

The Power to Devour

Revelation 11:5

And if anyone now wants to harm them, fire now chooses to flow [discharge, project] out of their mouth and now devours their enemies; so, if anyone wants to harm them, he must be caused to now be killed in this way.

Here is where understanding and following the **Code** is tantamount, as the Holy Spirit does not want us to miss His message that applies not just to those in the **End Times** but to His witnesses even now.

*"And if anyone **now** wants to harm them, fire **now chooses** to flow [discharge, project] out of their mouth and **now** devours their enemies; so, if anyone wants to harm them, he **now** must be caused to be killed in this way".*

Four times the Spirit utilized the *present* tense. This means this is not something that is reserved exclusively for the **End Times**. Rather, this is the **now** capability and the **now** experience of the bondservants of **Yahweh** wherever they are located around the globe: from the north to the south to the east and to the west. And this has been their experience every moment of now.

Witnesses will be Harmed!

"And if anyone now wants to harm them ... so, if anyone wants to harm them..." **Twice** the Spirit referred to those who desire harm the witnesses. When the Spirit repeats Himself, it is because He does not want us to miss what He is conveying. It is of utmost importance to His people. And given the use of the *present* tense, we can be confident that this this passage is a **NOW & THEN** message.

People will want to harm the **Called and Chosen and Faithful**, they will desire it; and they will harm them, and there will be consequences, grave consequences.

People desiring to harm these witnesses, and actually harming them, should not surprise us. The Spirit told us that *"all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted."*¹ As Jesus said, *"Remember the word that I said to you, a slave is not greater than his master. If they persecuted Me, they will also*

¹ **2 Timothy 3:12**

*persecute you; if they kept My word, they will keep yours also. But all these things they will do to you **for My name's sake**, because they do not know the one who sent me.”² Yes, “through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God.”³ “These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. I the world you have tribulation, but take courage, I have overcome the world.”⁴*

Suffering, persecution, harm is the destiny of those who are willing to be identified with Christ's suffering in order that they might know the full power of His resurrection.

Philippians 3:8-11

More than that, *I choose to now count all things to be loss* in view of the surpassing value of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom *I have been caused to have suffered the loss of all things*, and choose to now count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ, and may be caused to be found in Him, not now having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, **but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith**, *that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, caused to now being conformed to His death*; in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.

In other words, persecution, suffering, and loss is necessary if we are ever going to live as one who has been raised from the dead, as one who has been **willing** to let God crucify their *flesh* in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin but live as free men. For he who has died is freed from sin.⁵

1 Peter 4:1-3, 6

Therefore, since Christ has been suffering in the flesh, you are commanded to *choose to arm yourselves also with the same purpose*, because he who has been suffering in the flesh has chosen to be ceased from sin, so as to live the rest of the time in the flesh no longer for the lusts of men, but for the will of God...For the gospel has for this purpose been caused to be preached even to those who are dead, that though they are caused to be judged in the flesh as men, they may now live in the spirit according to the will of God.

Did you notice the use of the *participle*, “Christ has been **suffering** in the flesh.” That is because those who belong to Him are identified as His body (literally the body of Christ) whereas He is the head of the body.⁶ Therefore, as His people suffer, so He suffers; He is in this with us. Our suffering is not our own, but it is a shared experience. He knows it, He feels it, He suffers it along with us. Thus, He has been

² John 15:20-21

³ Acts 14:22

⁴ John 16:33

⁵ Romans 6:6-7

⁶ See Ephesians 1:22-23, 4:15-16; Colossians 2:18-19

suffering in the flesh.

The point being is that if we follow the Lamb wherever He goes, we will be persecuted and we will know loss. And, as Jesus hinted (*But all these things they will do to you **for My name's sake**, because they do not know the one who sent me*) it will come at the hands of those who abide in the temple at large—those in the Religion of Christianity.

However, God will use it to benefit our lives in a couple of ways. One, it will be used to separate us from our *Old Sinful Nature*, or said another way, to provide us opportunity-after-opportunity to learn how to walk by faith in the Spirit of God. And two, it will doom those who come against us in real time judgment. This is described in **Luke**.

Luke 21:12-19

But before all this *they will lay their hands on you and persecute you*, even now delivering you up to the synagogues and prisons, now being caused to be brought before kings and governors for my name's sake. This will be your opportunity to choose to bear witness. You are commanded to settle it therefore in your minds not to now meditate beforehand how you will be caused to answer, *for I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which none of those who are now choosing to be your adversaries will be able to be caused to withstand or contradict*. You will be caused to be delivered up even by parents and brothers and relatives and friends, and some of you they will put to death. You will choose to now be caused to being hated by all for my name's sake. But not a hair of your head will perish. By your endurance you will gain your lives.

To the outside observer, it seems that throughout time the Lord's two witnesses have been and will be being dragged before religious institutions, magistrates, and rulers, but it is God who is sending them as His witnesses to speak to those whom He has appointed to hear the Word. And, God, in the person of the Holy Spirit, will personally empower them to speak and to prophesy.

As such, their words will be incontestable. They will speak words which no adversary will be able to withstand, counter, or contradict. Both **NOW & THEN**, the wisdom of God will supernaturally pour forth from their mouths. As a result, the words of judgment and doom will not only be spoken but realized. These words themselves will be a witness, a testimony, to those in the world.

The Two Lampstands out of the Seven

And while some of that sounds pretty cool, it likely will not feel that way. These people intend physical, emotional, financial, and practical harm towards His witnesses. *Therefore, since Christ has been suffering in the flesh, we **must** arm ourselves also with the same purpose*. We must become mentally and emotionally ready. We **must** therefore never forget that out of the seven churches, there were only **two Lampstands** that were, as a whole, now abiding with Christ. These two lampstands were marked by suffering, persecution, and patient endurance at the hands of those who claimed they knew God but didn't.

Smyrna was bonded tightly to Jesus through their suffering, whereas Philadelphia was bonded to Jesus

in the midst of persecution by keeping the word of His perseverance and holding fast to what they had been given. This is the destiny of all who desire to live godly lives in Christ Jesus.

Fire Breathers?

“... fire **now** chooses to flow [discharge, project] out of their mouth and **now** devours their enemies.” Now, it is unlikely that people will suddenly become literal fire breathers, because as cool as that may sound, there is real context in the **Codex** that drives our understanding of this imagery. Sorry to bust any fantasies of fiery destruction and unbelievable power. After all the imagery was that of two olive trees and two lampstands, not two dragons.

Let’s hold to our context. All around the world there are those who **now** harm the witnesses of **Yahweh**, the stories of which are hard to stomach. Often, the people of God seem so helpless. However, whether they realize it or not, they are equipped with what can only be described as a powerful offensive defense, for they **now** devour their enemies with fire that **now** chooses to flow from their mouths.

The Prophetic Word

This **fire** is an allusion to a passage in the book of **Jeremiah** and the prophetic words which God put in the prophet’s mouth. Jeremiah had been prophesying on behalf of God and he warned the people about the judgment to come. And since Jeremiah was willing to be God’s prophetic voice of judgment, God declared that He would put His words into Jeremiah’s mouth and Jeremiah’s words would be like **fire** and the people would be as mere wood that would be consumed by this fire.⁷ The idea is that they would have no ability to resist or fight the words of judgment and doom, for his prophetic words of judgment became their destiny and their ruin.

Every word that Jeremiah prophetically uttered came true with a vengeance; it was just a matter of time. For instance, some of those words were not fulfilled for many years—not until Babylon came and destroyed the nation. However, some were fulfilled immediately. Jeremiah came up to one false prophet named Hananiah and said: “*Yahweh has not sent you, but the people believe your lies. Therefore, Yahweh says you must die. Your life will end this very year because you have rebelled against Yahweh. Two months later, Hananiah died*”⁸

In that light, this “*death threat*” might communicate both imagery of eternal death as well as a literal threat on the lives of those who harm the witnesses. After all, we have a couple other examples from the **Codex** that are amazing in terms of the power which God expressed through His prophets.

2 Kings 1:9-15

Then he {Ahaziah, the king of Israel} sent an army captain with fifty soldiers to arrest him {Elijah}. They found him sitting on top of a hill. The captain said to him, “Man of God, the king has commanded you to come down with us.” But Elijah replied to the captain, “If I am a man of God, let fire come down from heaven and destroy you and your fifty men!” Then fire fell from heaven and killed them all. So,

⁷ **Jeremiah 5:14**

⁸ **Jeremiah 28:15-16**

the king sent another captain with fifty men. The captain said to him, "Man of God, the king demands that you come down at once." Elijah replied, "If I am a man of God, let fire come down from heaven and destroy you and your fifty men!" And again, the fire of God fell from heaven and killed them all.

Once more the king sent a third captain with fifty men. But this time the captain went up the hill and fell to his knees before Elijah. He pleaded with him, "O man of God, please spare my life and the lives of these, your fifty servants. See how the fire from heaven came down and destroyed the first two groups. But now please spare my life!" Then the angel of **Yahweh** said to Elijah, "Go down with him, and don't be afraid of him." So, Elijah got up and went with him to the king.

They were slow learners, but eventually realized that they never should have messed with God's anointed. The prophet Elisha had a similar experience, but far more bizarre.

2 Kings 2:23-25

Elisha left Jericho and went up to Bethel. As he was walking along the road, a group of boys from the town began mocking and making fun of him. "Go away, baldy!" they chanted. "Go away, baldy!" Elisha turned around and looked at them, and he cursed them in the name of **Yahweh**. Then two bears came out of the woods and mauled forty-two of them.

That must be the most bizarre story I have ever read in the **Codex**. And it is not like Elisha is a little kid being teased, he is a full-grown man and a hard-core prophet at that. He gets so annoyed that he curses these boys and two bears maul forty-two of them. It is crazy. It just tells you that it is a serious thing to mess with God's anointed ones who have been gifted with the power to devour their adversaries with words of fire.

This same sort of thing will happen with the two witnesses. God said He will grant His witnesses to prophecy; thus, His prophetic word will be like fire that will doom in judgment those who will harm them in the way that fire devours wood.

The Fire that Chooses to Flow

"... fire **now** chooses to flow [discharge, project] out of their mouth..." This may seem like an odd personification, but is it? Or is it just another way to express what the Spirit has already communicated? For reference, "flow" is rendered in the *present middle indicative*. So, we know it is happening even now, and it comes from an inner choice. It is a power that will on its own, so-to-speak, come forth. Let's return to that passage in **Luke 21** to get our understanding.

Luke 21:12-19

But before all this *they will lay their hands on you and persecute you*, even now delivering you up to the synagogues and prisons, now being caused to be brought before kings and governors for my name's sake. This will be your opportunity to choose to bear witness. You are commanded to settle it

therefore in your minds not to now meditate beforehand how you will be caused to answer, *for I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which none of those who are now choosing to be your adversaries will be able to be caused to withstand or contradict.* You will be caused to be delivered up even by parents and brothers and relatives and friends, and some of you they will put to death. You will choose to now be caused to being hated by all for my name's sake. But not a hair of your head will perish. By your endurance you will gain your lives.

The reason “flows” (“... fire **now** chooses to flow [discharge, project] out of their mouth...”) is rendered in the *present middle indicative*, is that based on this passage in **Luke**, God will fill the mouths of the witnesses with words of wisdom and judgment, but the witnesses still must choose to let this fire flow out of their mouths. It is power which God has granted but which they must now choose to wield.

Now Devours their Enemies

The Spirit keeps us tied to the **NOW & THEN**, as “devours” is also rendered in the *present* tense; and being in the *indicative*, we know it is a statement of fact. The word of God even now devours the enemies of God’s chosen witnesses. Sometimes, their words are immediately fulfilled and other times it will be realized in delayed judgment; but either way, the fulfillment of their prophetic words will be as certain as the way fire devours grass, wood, and stubble.

Judgment by fire is how Jeremiah, Elijah, and Elisha experienced **Yahweh’s** interactions with their enemies, and it is to be our experience as well. Again, this is not something that is reserved exclusively for the **End Times**. This is a **NOW & THEN** sort of thing.

In This Way He Must Be Killed

“... he must be caused to **now** be killed in this way.” By the way, “killed” is rendered in the *present passive infinitive*. Thus, it is a real time judgment, brought about by God, as their eternity becomes their now. In the same way that those who have trusted themselves to Jesus now have eternal life (a statement on their now), those who come against God’s anointed witnesses will now be killed, a statement of their now.⁹ As Jesus said:

John 3:18-20

Whoever believes in him is not condemned, *but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.* And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their deeds were evil. For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed.

Their doom, their condemnation, their death, is their present experience. Keep in mind, there is an

⁹ **John 5:24**

alternative to the good news and the life which Jesus offers, but it is terrible news, for it is death. And by death the Bible does not mean non-existence, rather, an existence (both now and eternally) separated from God and exposed, vulnerable, to the destructive powers of darkness.

But mark the words of the Spirit, the prophetic word that preaches the good news will explicitly, as well as implicitly, speak the truth about the terrible news. It is part of the gospel and cannot be avoided. **Thus, those who have closed their hearts to God and would choose to harm God's witnesses will be killed by the very word that they have rejected.** None will escape, for they are and have been doomed to die in this manner.

To summarize, the two witnesses of **Yahweh** (the bondservants of Jesus Christ comprised of both Jews and Gentiles) even now speak words of judgment and doom. And those who by their very nature resist the true gospel of Jesus Christ will even now be consumed by those prophetic words. Some will face immediate consequences, and some will face delayed and eternal consequences, but no one who comes against God's anointed ones to harm them will escape judgment. After all, the anointed ones (the "oiled" ones) are His precious possession.¹⁰

This power of fire (the prophetic word) and the exercise of this power is a real-time present experience of the bondservants of **Yahweh**. This is not just a power that is reserved for the two witnesses who will prophecy during the tribulation. The **Code** is clear. This is for **NOW** and this is for **THEN**!

Miracles

Revelation 11:6

These **now** have the authority to shut up the sky, so that rain will **now** not fall during the days of their prophesying; and they **now** have authority over the waters to **now** turn them into blood, and to strike the earth with every wound [or calamity], as often as they may desire.

Wow, now we're talking. The two witnesses may not literally become fire breathers (I know many of you were disappointed to find that out), but they are not without their adequate endowment of real power. They shut up the sky, turn waters into blood, and strike the earth with every wound, as often as they may desire—yes, as often as they desire.

These miracles are reminiscent of those performed by Elijah and Moses. Elijah prayed and a drought came over the land, and it did not rain again until sometime in the third year of the drought, which Jewish tradition, and the book of **James**, prophetically says was at the **3.5-year** mark.¹¹ James goes on to make the point that the prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much, hinting that the **Called and Chosen and Faithful** should and could be doing miracles of that kind even now.¹² And it was Moses that stuck his staff in the Nile and God changed the water of the Nile into blood, and he also brought forth plagues,

¹⁰ **1 Peter 2:9**

¹¹ **1 Kings 17, 18:1**

¹² **James 5:16-18**

pestilence, and calamity.¹³

Therefore, we have examples in the **Codex** of these types of miracles literally occurring. However, given the fact that we are still viewing images through the lens of the heavenly, there may also be a figurative or idiomatic message, at least in the water and the blood.

Authority NOT Power

By the way, many translations say that these witnesses have the *power* to shut up the sky and so on. But as with the prior grant of their ability to prophecy, they are given the “privilege” or “authority,” or the “delegated influence” to do these things, NOT the power. Unlike the demonic spirits who do possess power, there is nothing innate about this ability, it is a gift of authority over something, to which that “something” is subject. As such, even the demonic spirits and their power are subject to this grant of authority.

Double Drought & Blood

These witnesses **now** have (*present* tense) the authority to close the heavens (shut up the sky) so that it literally will not rain during the days of their prophesying. The word translated “rain” is comprised of two words, one is a noun (“*huetos*”) and it literally means rain. The other is a verb in the *present* tense (“*brecho*”) and it means to moisten. Thus, they have the authority to not just prevent the rain but to prevent there from being any moisture, for instance, from dew, frost, or snow. It is like a double drought: No rain and no moisture. In like manner, they **now** have the authority over the waters to **now** turn them into blood.

Pay Attention to the Shifts

This *authority* over the waters (rain, dew, frost, snow, and turning the water into blood and to strike the earth with calamity) **is always a now thing**, as all of these references are rendered in the *present active indicative*. The two witnesses now have this authority, and that is a statement of fact.

However, when it comes to the actual changes that occur or the impact of the exercise of that authority, the Spirit brings in a little shift, as “to shut” and “to strike” are rendered in the *aorist active infinitive*. The purpose of the *infinitive* is to discuss the action in general verses a specific instance of the action. Thus, “to shut” and “to strike” is what occurs from the exercise of their authority as it is exercised throughout the lives of the two witnesses.

Yet, when it comes to the blood, the statement “to now turn” is rendered in the *present active infinitive* (and not the *aorist*). The *infinitive* discusses the action in general. Ok, we got that, but why the use of the *present* tense?

The Spirit seems to want us to get into our “thick skulls” that this is not just a statement over our lives in general (the typical use of the *aorist* tense), **it needs to be understood as a statement about our lives now**. The two witnesses (the **Called and Chosen and Faithful**) now have the authority to now turn water into blood.

¹³ Exodus 7-11

NO Limit

The entire statement ends with this phrase, “... *as often as they may desire*.” Being rendered in *aorist active subjunctive*, the Spirit is letting us know that throughout their lives, this is up to their discretion.

The Layering of Time: **Now & Then**

As stated at the beginning of this chapter, **Revelation 11** is one of the most time layered passages in **Revelation** and therefore one of the most misunderstood. The **Code** seems to go crazy utilizing the *aorist*, *future*, and the *present* tense in a way that layer’s time like the layers of a cake. In one layer, it deals with the time near and surrounding the blowing of the 7th Trumpet. In another layer, it seems to address the entire first 3.5-year period. And still in another layer, the time before the tribulation where those who would bring forth the witness of Christ are alive and active.

In that vein, we know that God will give to His witnesses the authority to prophecy for **1,260 days**. This was rendered in the *future* tense. And yet, these witnesses are those who are now worshipping in the Sanctuary, rendered in the *present* tense. They are being measured throughout time (*aorist* tense). But they are even now given authority (*present* tense) to now do various miracles throughout their lives (*aorist* tense), so often as they may desire (*aorist* tense).

This is One Layered Cake!

To simplify, the two witnesses are the bondservants of Jesus Christ (the **Called and Chosen and Faithful**) who, at every moment of now, are worshipping **Yahweh**—that would include what to us is the future, but to those who will be granted the power to prophecy for **1,260 days**, will be their “now.” Every moment of now!

The **Called and Chosen and Faithful** have been granted authority (like Elijah and Moses) to now do these very specific miracles with effects that occur throughout their lives. And they may do these miracles as often as they desire.

For NOW, specific miracles. But THEN, specific miracles plus prophecy.

Water & Blood – Blessing & Relenting

Rain and water in general are often referred to in the Old Testament as a picture or a metaphor depicting the **blessing** of God, and as a gift indicating the **relenting** of judgment.¹⁴

Practically, it makes sense that the Spirit used this image for a symbol of His blessing as the economies of the world were largely agrarian, and if they did not have the rain or the running water they would be crippled. So, rain and water were a very practical way that God would show His favor and care toward His people. Conversely, the restriction of rain and water was a clear message of His judgment. An example of this is found in the Old Testament book of **Amos**.

¹⁴ 2 Kings 3:17; 2 Chronicles 6:26-27; Psalm 84:6; Isaiah 30:23; Zechariah 10:1

Amos 4:6-8

But I gave you also cleanness of teeth in all your cities and lack of bread in all your places, yet you have not returned to Me," declares **Yahweh**. Furthermore, I withheld the rain from you while there were still three months until harvest. Then I would send rain on one city, and on another city, I would not send rain; one part would be rained on, while the part not rained on would dry up. So, two or three cities would stagger to another city to drink water but would not be satisfied; yet you have not returned to Me," declares **Yahweh**.

Moreover, in the story of the **Exodus**, the second miracle which Moses performed (2 being the number of division and witness—the *Spirit sure is scarily consistent with His use of metaphors*) is when Moses turned water into blood. Egypt was flush with water. The Nile and all their springs of fresh water were a glorious source of their blessing and abundance. But when the waters were suddenly, in a moment, turned into blood, disaster ensued. Not only did it kill the fish (a large part of their diet and economy), but their drinking water was also completely spoiled.¹⁵

So perhaps this picture of shutting the skies so no rain or moisture may fall is communicating that **Yahweh's** two witnesses now have the authority to **remove** the blessing of God from the peoples of this earth and **to now turn** their current blessings into absolute disaster (imaged in the transformation from water to blood).

Every Wound or Calamity

"... and to strike the earth with every wound [or calamity] ..." The word translated as "plague" in most Bibles comes from a root word meaning to strike or to pound, or by implication to inflict a wound as with a whip or lash.

For instance, the attack of the locust like demons and the army of demons that kill 1/3 of the earth are examples of this type of wound or calamity.¹⁶ In addition, there will be seven-plagues in the final seven-bowls of wrath that will inflict the earth, and they will include: malignant sores, turning the seas and the rivers into blood, being scorched with fire and fierce heat, darkness and pain, the removal of all spiritual protection, an earthquake, and large 100-pound hailstones slamming down on humanity. Those are some very intense wounds or calamities.¹⁷

This is intense!

Is the Spirit saying that the **Called and Chosen and Faithful** even now have been granted the authority to strike or knock down the earth with all these wounds or calamities? It sure seems so; and they are authorized to do it as often as they may desire. It is no wonder that the peoples of the world hate the **Called and Chosen and Faithful** and want them dead, or at least will hate them and want them dead when they start doing what they have been authorized to do.

¹⁵ **Exodus 7:14-25**

¹⁶ See **Revelation 9**

¹⁷ See **Revelation 15:1, 16:1-12, 7-21**

Miracles – What Does This Mean?

But if this is the authority that His bondservants **NOW** have (turning blessings into judgments, removing blessings, and bringing forth great calamity), do they know it? Do they, I hate to say “pray for” or more appropriately, stand on their authority and desire and declare these types of events? Is this to be a significant aspect of their prayer life?

Those are some powerful questions that will have to wait until our next podcast to address.