

## **Sermon to the Saints which are at Topeka, Kansas -- Sunday, September 6, 2015.**

***And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth. These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth. And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed. These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will. (Revelation 11:3-6)***

Who are these two witnesses? A question that has been pontificated on by much greater minds than I could hope to attain unto. Yet, when I finish reading any exposition I find myself frustrated and anxious. Frustrated that it feels as though we have lost the proverbial trees in the forest; anxious because I cannot read these compelling words without so strong a sense of relevance that I'm scarcely able to speak on this glorious Apocalypse without the haunting question returning to me time and again: Who are these two witnesses?

The path we will take for the next two sermons -- if you have found yourself in these deep waters -- may bring you both deep sorrow and manic elation. Like that beautiful word *Shigionoth* -- extreme conflicting emotions simultaneously. I have come to the conclusion that to grasp these two witnesses is to take hold on the whole of Revelation 4 through 11:14 -- and truly well beyond, as it opens so many closed doors; answers so many mysterious questions.

When I have spoken with many of you who are present in this house today -- about your study-based thoughts on these two witnesses -- I have consistently felt that your various views of them were substantive. I trust that you will find full satisfaction in my sermons today and next week, that your analyses were legitimately part of this picture.

These two witnesses, since before John saw this vision ... and from before the creation of the world ... have been given their assignment and are situated in God's providence for the fulfillment of it. Not just in the absolute sense -- the sense that all things whatsoever that happen in time were decreed by a sovereign God to happen in eternity. I mean that from the earliest events in the creation, these two witnesses have been advertised ... symbolized ... and revealed in their unique station or occupation.

Let us begin a few preliminary considerations on this subject by taking a look at the language here, and in two other passages that find them:

***"These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth."***

**(Revelation 11:4)**

and

**"And I said, I have looked, and behold a candlestick all of gold, ... And two olive trees by it, one upon the right side of the bowl, and the other upon the left side thereof. ... Then answered I, and said unto him, What are these two olive trees upon the right side of the candlestick and upon the left side thereof? ... Then said he, These are the two anointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth." (Zechariah 4:2-3, 11, 14)**

and

**"Then I Daniel looked, and, behold, there stood other two, the one on this side of the bank of the river, and the other on that side of the bank of the river. And one said to the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, How long shall it be to the end of these wonders? And I heard the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and sware by him that liveth for ever that it shall be for a time, times, and an half; and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished." (Daniel 12:5-7)**

There are other passages regarding these two witnesses, but at least these three are captured in visions directly, and unmistakably related to Christ's Apocalypse -- Christ's return in power and glory. In each, there are two -- exactly two -- personas identified. Not one, not three, not an unspecified "group" number, but two. The word translated into English "two", in each of these passages, means just that ... two. While I will always defer to competent, disciplined treatment of scriptural references that are presented in support of the proposition that "two" can be a representative number, I am presently confident that there is too much specific information applied to these -- wherever they are found to be discussed in this holy book -- to casually dismiss the enumerative value: I believe these here, in Revelation 11, are two.

And there should be no confusion on the question, "why two?" Scripture instructs that there are at least two required for the confirmation of every matter:

**"One witness shall not rise up against a man for any iniquity, or for any sin, in any sin that he sinneth: at the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall the matter be established." (Deuteronomy 19:15)**

and

**"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." (Matthew 18:16)**

and

**"It is also written in your law, that the testimony of two men is true." (John 8:17)**

Furthermore, when Christ sent his ministers forth into every city and place, they were sent **"two and two" (Mark 6:7, Luke 10:1)**. So for there to be two witnesses in these most violent and contentious times, could well be understood to be for the purpose that every certain thing, being testified to at that dark hour, is established -- even though the preaching they engage upon **"is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God." (1 Corinthians 1:18)**

Another consideration. In readings and in discussions, I have observed an inclination on the part of expositors to give names to these two remarkable subjects; which I believe to be an exercise both of futility and in straying dangerously close to the acknowledged error of our dear friend and patriarch Job:

***"therefore have I uttered that I understood not; things too wonderful for me, which I knew not." (Job 42:3)***

I am most loathe to do such a thing; and thereby perhaps rob my dear friends of the comfort that attends the attainment to what ***is to be known*** regarding these two, without the clutter of speculation regarding their distinct, individual identities. Particularly since I frankly believe we've been told by Christ Himself:

***"it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared." (Mark 10:40)***

Speculation of their identities have included Joshua, Zerubbabel, Enoch, Moses, John, ... and many insist that at least one is Elijah, because of the words of Malachi:

***"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)***

While I have carefully parsed out the words of Joseph Seiss (in his work *Apocalypse*) on this subject -- and indeed with a less copious handling of this very weighty matter, even found his argumentation having merit -- I am wholly unconvinced that these two gentle, mourning souls are a returned Enoch and Elijah. What Christ says to the apostles who asked for Him to expound Malachi's words is dispositive on the question, in my view:

***"And his disciples asked him, saying, Why then say the scribes that Elias must first come? And Jesus answered and said unto them, Elias truly shall first come, and restore all things. But I say unto you, That Elias is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed. Likewise shall also the Son of man suffer of them. Then the disciples understood that he spake unto them of John the Baptist." (Matthew 17:10-13)***

The import of these words are quite clear to me ... and I trust after you have taken this exploratory course with me you will likewise be clear. Christ here tells the apostles that the same way John the Baptist served as an Elijah-type messenger for His first advent ... a most appropriate Elijah-type messenger will be on the ground to declare to a world that has utterly, systemically, and institutionally forgotten God (**Psalms 9:17**,

**50:22)** and foolishly resolved that He does not exist (**Psalms 14:1, 53:1**): "*Jehovah is God!*" Just as the Jews rejected that message from John the Baptist in the days of Christ's earthly tabernacle, the whole of the earth will reject it in the "***great and dreadful day of the LORD!***"!

The dispensational grant of these two witnesses will be the spirit of Elijah in proper fullness. Likewise, the restorative peacemaking disposition of these two witnesses will mirror what is written in Malachi ("***shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers!***") and Matthew ("***and restore all things!***") about this Elijah. Elijah is one more type of these witnesses. One of many found in this blessed Book.

Finally, since we are viewing these two witnesses in the fulfillment of their office through the lens of John's apocalyptic prophecies (and in the context of examining the concomitant events related to Christ's return, the rise of Antichrist, the fretful rush to Armageddon, the millennial reign of Christ, and finally the great Judgment Day that launches the whole of the human experiment into eternity's finality) it is easy to become myopic -- near-sighted -- in the consideration of them. It is, I mean, an understandable reasoning process to say we see these friends of ours most completely here, in Revelation 11. But, I'm not convinced that is the case. We may, in fact, see them better and more completely if we begin where they are else wise introduced in God's Holy Word, and work toward this glorious display of their work in John's visions and writings.

The similes and metaphors used throughout Scripture to bring our minds to these witnesses -- in their character and their grant of office -- are numerous ... interlacing ... interactive ... and without exception compelling and beautiful. That's a mouthful, and needs to be emphasized by being repeated. The work in unpacking the mystery of these two, therefore, was the more complex and exhilarating ... and I suspect there are many more gold veins yet un-mined in this regard, so I welcome one and all to the work; as the Lord may lead you to it. So, let us dive in.

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***"And thou shalt make two cherubims of gold, of beaten work shalt thou make them, in the two ends of the mercy seat. And make one cherub on the one end, and the other cherub on the other end: even of the mercy seat shall ye make the cherubims on the two ends thereof. And the cherubims shall stretch forth their wings on high, covering the mercy seat with their wings, and their faces shall look one to another; toward the mercy seat shall the faces of the cherubims be."*** (Exodus 25:18-20)

When our beloved brother Moses was in the mount, he received a pattern for the whole of the temple in which the worship of the true and living God was to be performed by the Children of Israel. Each aspect of the temple was to symbolize the proper view of and disposition toward God -- including many types of the coming Messiah that were fulfilled when Christ fulfilled His part of the Covenant of Grace. At the center of this system was the Ark of the Covenant seated on the Mercy Seat -- upon which the presence of God was

positioned, the Shekinah Glory. Within the Ark were the tables of stone, the pot of manna, and Aaron's rod that budded.

We know -- at least those in this house who have reached the age of sufficient maturity to have edification on such matters -- what is represented by the mercy seat as well as the ark and its contents. What, though, are these cherubims? What do they represent, and why are they positioned in this unique proximity to the Shekinah? The two witnesses are said to be in such proximity:

***"Then said he, These are the two anointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth." (Zechariah 4:14)***

**and**

***"These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth." (Revelation 11:4)***

Furthermore, in a familiar treatment of these interesting creatures, found in the first and tenth chapters of Ezekiel, we find an interesting descriptive reference. For reasons to be explored more fully at a later point in my treatment of this subject, I believe the living creatures found discussed in Ezekiel are (at least in part) referencing these same two beloved friends of ours. As they are described in the first chapter, we find:

***"As for the likeness of their faces, they four had the face of a man, and the face of a lion, on the right side: and they four had the face of an ox on the left side; they four also had the face of an eagle." (Ezekiel 1:10)***

When these same creatures are revisited in Ezekiel's visions, we find a slightly different description:

***"And every one had four faces: the first face was the face of a cherub, and the second face was the face of a man, and the third the face of a lion, and the fourth the face of an eagle." (Ezekiel 10:14)***

We also find these same creatures in the fourth chapter of Revelation -- that chapter that brings about the introduction into this most savage dispensation -- with a similar description of the faces with which they present:

***"And the first beast was like a lion, and the second beast like a calf, and the third beast had a face as a man, and the fourth beast was like a flying eagle." (Revelation 4:7)***

Four faces these living creatures have -- representing their various characteristics in the fulfillment of their offices. In all three listings you find the eagle, the lion, and the man. They differ on the fourth characteristic -- once using the term "ox" and otherwise the term "cherub" and then "calf". It is instructive, because there is a compelling association between what is represented above the mercy seat and this primary character of the living creatures; and I am convinced the two witnesses.

A bit closer look at the passage in Ezekiel just preceding this four-faced reiteration of the living creature, I believe gives us a most fascinating and thrilling bit of assistance in seeing what I seek for you to learn this afternoon:

***"He cried also in mine ears with a loud voice, saying, Cause them that have charge over the city to draw near, even every man with his destroying weapon in his hand. And, behold, six men came from the way of the higher gate, which lieth toward the north, and every man a slaughter weapon in his hand; and one man among them was clothed with linen, with a writer's inkhorn by his side: and they went in, and stood beside the brasen altar. And the glory of the God of Israel was gone up from the cherub, whereupon he was, to the threshold of the house. And he called to the man clothed with linen, which had the writer's inkhorn by his side; And the LORD said unto him, Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof. ¶ And to the others he said in mine hearing, Go ye after him through the city, and smite: let not your eye spare, neither have ye pity: ... "*** (Ezekiel 9:1-5)

There is much, much more in the passage that further shows this point, but let us take this one sample to focus. Here you have Ezekiel's prophetic vision of what you find over in Revelation chapter seven:

***"And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads. And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel."*** (Revelation 7:2-4)

We know this latter quote is part of the removal of the seven seals from the Book of Redemption -- in which (we have read) the "four beasts" have active participation (**Revelation 6:1, 3, 5, & 7, and 7:11**). In the former passage, we have the same sealing of the same Israelites ... and we find this creature from which the Glory of God is seen "gone up". It is the same scene ... it involves the same players ... it is the same creature ... positioned in direct proximity to the place from which God rises up to do His work in the earth! The Mercy Seat! The place where God has chosen to dwell with His people! Presently, the church!

***"Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."*** (Hebrews 4:16)

The language is too similar to that description of the cherubims positioned above the mercy seat in the Holy of Holies -- not to see that Moses was directed to place this symbol of God's two witnesses into the very design of the temple. Having, by the great mercies of God toward me, found and pulled on this golden thread of scripture I thought to see if any exposition regarding these cherubims on the mercy seat referenced any such connection. Here are some of Gill's words about these cherubs on the lid of the Ark:

"[T]hese may be signified by two, and ... the ministers of the word in all ages, and particularly during the reign of antichrist, are called the two witnesses that prophesy in sackcloth;"

Not bad ... as far as it goes, and considering the frame of time reference brother Gill had. Let us explore this a bit more. If we see in the passages out of Ezekiel chapters one and ten that the "ox" and "cherub" are terms equally representing one of the four "faces" or "characteristics" of these living creatures, -- and mixing in the "calf" reference from Revelation 4; what can we learn about this distinction? What is it about the "ox" or the "calf" that would be a more relevant "face" to represent these creatures on the ark -- that might also help us to understand better the two witnesses of Revelation 11? Perhaps more importantly? *Is* the "ox" or "calf" a consistent representation of these creatures with how they are presented in Revelation 11? Gill's examination of Ezekiel's "living creature" faces includes this about the ox:

"[E]xpressive of the *patience of Gospel ministers in bearing the yoke that is upon them, not only of the ministry, but of the weaknesses of saints, and the reproaches and indignities of the wicked; and in instructing those that oppose themselves, and in waiting the issue of their ministry: and also of their laboriousness in their ministrations; particularly in treading out the corn of the word, for the subsistence of the saints:*"

***"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 gentle servants under examination are charged with the ministerial duties in a time when the greatest oppression the earth has to offer (to that day) is on full display. The earth and those that dwell upon it are being slain in numbers unheard of since the flood of Noah. Monstrous tormenting and slaughtering creatures -- only previously (and weakly) captured in the world of theatrical make-believe -- are turned loose on a weary, rebellious, and increasingly-enraged population. The unmistakable declaration about the cause of all their horrors flows incessantly from this tiny flock of patient, gentle lambs who have the only source of hope in existence; and who are ably presenting it before the faces of every man.

***"And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ." (2 Thessalonians 3:5)***

and

***"Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh." (James 5:7-8)***

These two passages -- both directly in proximity to the apostle discussing the violence and terror of this same hour -- emphasizes strongly the character of the "ox" in the performance of his work. So, it is the altogether perfect and appropriate character to be presented in the temple ... as much as can be seen in this view of them, at least. Now let us consider the next part of our examination of our two friends.

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***"In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory. And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke. ¶ Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts. Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar: And he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged. Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me. ¶ And he said, Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed. Then said I, Lord, how long? And he answered, Until the cities be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land be utterly desolate, And the LORD have removed men far away, and there be a great forsaking in the midst of the land. But yet in it shall be a tenth, and it shall return, and shall be eaten: as a teil tree, and as an oak, whose substance is in them, when they cast their leaves: so the holy seed shall be the substance thereof." (Isaiah 6:1-13)***

Our brother Sam treated a portion of this passage a few weeks back, and I tell you that to the extent he treated it -- particularly for the purpose on which he treated it -- he was and is exactly correct. In fact, as it applies to the character and ministrations of the two witnesses, his words are acutely accurate and applicable. I solicit your review and examination of that sermon as part of your full enjoyment of what I will now do in treatment of this whole passage.

I submit the following propositions regarding this prophecy of Isaiah, and a multitude of considerations in support thereof:

1. The whole of the chapter is an eschatological prophecy -- treating from a particular and limited perspective the subject matter covered in Revelation chapters 4 through 20.
2. Isaiah stands representative of the Jewish elect, who will be called and will be a clarion voice regarding the cryptic message in the names of Isaiah's two sons.
3. The Seraphims are the two witnesses, and provide a strong look at their participation in bringing the Jewish elect through the period from their call to the return of Christ. The disposition of these witnesses, as understood by the presentation of these seraphims, is essential to a proper view of their unique dispensation and grant of authority.

Isaiah says that his vision is of "**the Lord sitting upon a throne**," which is to be understood as distinct from God the father. That is, Christ is seated upon His throne in this vision. Christ, who had been testified of, but not yet to have come in His first advent, let alone upon his throne that is "**high and lifted up**". This is the Messiah, when He begins to go about the business of finally and fully establishing His kingdom as declared by John in Revelation:

***"And immediately I was in the spirit: and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne. And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone:" (Revelation 4:2-3)***

Further, consider the words spoken by the seraphims, one to the other:

***"And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory." (Isaiah 6:3)***

This underscored portion of the passage is not, I submit, a mere generic statement of what has been the case since the heavens and earth were created. It is a specific reference to a specific point in providence ... a triggering point. Consider if one additional word were added to the clause: "***the whole earth is [finally] full of his glory.***" That is to say, as the apostle and Christ Himself tells us:

***"For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, ... that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in." (Romans 11:25)***

and

***"And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." (Matthew 24:14)***

As we are instructed throughout Holy Scripture, the essential glory of God is pronounced by every created thing, and that truth has been part of every providential period from the time in history when the decree went forth.

***"The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard." (Psalms 19:1-3)***

But the glory of Christ, in His office as the Messiah, the Redeemer of His people, the Kingdom of Christ -- that glorious work will be completed on a day certain and declared to be at an end, at which time another dispensation will usher in the readying of the earth for Christ to come and take His Kingdom. That, I proffer, is the vision that Isaiah was given. The time of the end. The Day of the Lord.

And if you look at the passage in Revelation, which first introduces us to this dispensation, you find these same creatures ... with the same message ... about the same Redeemer:

***"And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come."***

**(Revelation 4:8)**

A further proof that this vision is eschatological is found in discussing the role of Isaiah in the vision. Specifically, a look at these words he speaks – upon taking in this vision:

***"¶ Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts."*** (Isaiah 6:5)

It is significant that the focus of Isaiah's declaration of woe is his and the Jews' "unclean lips". We know -- from what Scripture teaches about them, what Christ says about them, and what our experience has demonstrated about them – that the Jews are utterly full of every unclean behavior; both spiritually and physically. If for no other reason, we know it because they were removed from their land – the punishment that was laid at their feet as punishment for making themselves even filthier than those who were cast out before them:

***"And ye shall not walk in the manners of the nation, which I cast out before you: for they committed all these things, and therefore I abhorred them."*** (Leviticus 20:23)

So, why is the focus in this vision the lips? Of course, it is because it is the lips that utter the ultimate blasphemy against the King who is the subject of this vision: The Messiah! The horror that Isaiah is perceiving is the error articulated by the Apostle John. When he sees Christ on His throne, he suddenly and frighteningly knows:

***"Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son."*** (1 John 2:22)

This knowledge drives him forth in declaring that his and his people's lips are unclean for denying the Messiah – though remember that at the time of his prophecy Christ had not actually come or had yet been rejected, crucified, and slain by the Jews. This fact makes clear that Isaiah's vision is of a time when the issue of this conflict has come upon the earth generally ... and the Jews specifically!

Now, considering the role of these seraphims. First, let me say that there is much to be said about the description of these creatures that relate to next week's sermon. Nevertheless by considering them briefly here, we find yet more reason to know that Isaiah is standing in the stead of the Jewish people ... and more particularly, the Jews who will be cleansed. Let us consider here the seraphims' role, through this direct exchange one has with Isaiah:

***"Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar: And he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged."*** (Isaiah 6:6-7)

Whatever else the seraphims represent in this remarkable passage, we know that they are instrumental to the calling out of the redeemed Jews. It is the seraphim that brings forth the purging coal; that places it upon the lips of the antichristic Jew in this vision. In Ezekiel's vision on the same subject, you also see the presence of these same kind souls:

***"... [A]nd one man among them was clothed with linen, with a writer's inkhorn by his side: and they went in, and stood beside the brasen altar. And the glory of the God of Israel was gone up from the cherub, whereupon he was, to the threshold of the house. And he called to the man clothed with linen, which had the writer's inkhorn by his side; And the LORD said unto him, Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof." (Ezekiel 9:2-4)***

The same place the cherubim sit – the mercy seat – is the place from whence Christ here rises to do the business of marking – and in Revelation the sealing – of these regenerated Jews. The mercy seat where the cherubim are positioned. The church where the two witnesses are positioned and from whence they do the ministering to these redeemed – marked – sealed Jews.

***"Shall I bring to the birth, and not cause to bring forth? saith the LORD: shall I cause to bring forth, and shut the womb? saith thy God. Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her: rejoice for joy with her, all ye that mourn for her:" (Isaiah 66:9-10)***

Further, once Isaiah, in this vision, has received this purging of his lips -- as representative of those redeemed of the Children of Israel -- he goes forth with his ministry on two principle columns: The near complete destruction of the Jewish population, and the survival and comforting of the remnant. He names his children according to his testimony to the dying nation (Israel); temporally by the Assyrians, but more completely and finally by the armies led by Antichrist:

- Mahershalalhashbaz: "swift is booty, speedy is prey"
- Shearjashub: "a remnant shall return"

It is a strong vision of these blessed ministering saints helping the 144,000 elect Jews come to repentance and to the acknowledging of the truth that Christ is the Messiah. These ministers, seen here as fiery spirits going forth in the name of the King of kings, display attributes that give us a better understanding not only of their mission ... but under some further examination, of their character as well. As Sam expounded with solid words, these have a spiritual completeness, fullness of maturity -- both as to doctrine and practice -- that sets them apart for this unique time and work.

These cover their feet and their faces while flying to do the work of the King. These know they are not to mix their works or their corruption with the King's business. It is not for their glory they fly. It is not for their works they are sent. They add nothing to the King's honor, glory, or issue; they are always and only servants.

This is true for these servants -- these ministers of the Gospel -- in a way that exceeds the condition of the church prior to the Day of the Lord. Prior to this most violent dispensation, the church is a work that is incomplete. The ministers, a work that is incomplete. Many passages heretofore familiar to the eyes, ears, and hearts of those in this house have only been incompletely viewed and understood.

A full and edifying view of these two witnesses requires a clearer understanding of the vision of Zechariah, the poem of Solomon, the letters to the seven churches that are in Asia, and the Garden of Eden. We will continue our analysis of these two when we return next week. I am hopeful that you have been comforted with these words so far ... and I am most humbled and thankful to have opportunity to feed you. I love you all. Amen.