

34 THE TWO WITNESSES OF REVELATION 11 (THEORY)

INTRODUCTION: In the midst of the Roman-Jewish War, two high priest leaders appeared in Josephus's "The Wars of the Jews" and the events and circumstances surrounding them parallel much of the "two witness" prophecy of Revelation 11. We present evidence for this theory and continue the documentation introduced in video #28, that zealot-led Israel was the Beast of Revelation. This is only a brief over-view and we refer the reader to Adam Maarschalk's more extensive research for further study.

In this paper, we present evidence that:

1. The two witnesses were two first century high priests, Ananus son of Ananus and Jesus son of Gamaliel.
2. The beast was zealot-led Israel.
3. The "trampling nations" of verse 2 was zealot-led Israel.

1. TWO WITNESSES: HIGH PRIEST ANANUS and HIGH PRIEST JESUS, SON OF GAMALIEL

A. The two priests had authority, under the Mosaic Law, to "stand before God."

Those who "stood before God" (vs 4) were "set aside" priests or prophets. (Deut. 10:6, I Kings 17:1).

B. The witnesses were lamp stands.

Lamp stands fed by oil from the olive trees brought wisdom to the people. (As in Zech 4).

They showed reverence for the temple of Yahweh and brought truth to the people. (Wars 4.3 to 4.6)

C. The witnesses were upright in character.

"[Ananus] was a venerable and very just man...he had been a lover of a kind of parity, even with regard to the meanest of the people...did ever prefer the public welfare before his own advantage...Jesus was also joined with him [Ananus]; and although he was inferior to him upon comparison, he was superior to the rest and I cannot but think that it was because God had doomed this city to destruction, as a polluted city and was resolved to purge his sanctuary by fire, that he cut off these their great defenders and well-wishers." (Wars 4.5.2)

D. The two witnesses had divine protection from harm, for a time, which "tormented" their enemies.

Even though the zealots were active and menacing during the time of the witnesses, they were restrained by the two witnesses for a time. Josephus said that Ananus had "the mastery of those that opposed his designs, or were for the war." (Wars 4.5.2).

E. Fire came from their mouths.

This is figurative language used elsewhere for the fiery power of prophetic speech.

"I will make My words in your mouth fire, and this people wood, and it shall devour them." Jer. 5:14

F. Like Moses and Elijah, the two men witnessed against moral corruption in Israel.

Ananus spoke against the moral laxity and pervasive tolerance of evil in Jerusalem. (Wars 4.3.10)

Jesus spoke against the utter depravity of the zealots and warned the Idumeans of their imminent moral danger in siding with them. (Wars 4.4.3)

G. They had power to shut up rain.

Josephus made reference, later in "Wars", that the literal springs that fed the city had almost completely dried up. Wars 5.9.4. Rain is also used figuratively in scripture for goodness—Ps. 72:6.

H. Turn water to blood and smite earth with plague.

Is this a reference to the Galilee defeat and Dead Sea defeat of the zealots in paper 33, #6?

I. The rebels killed the two prophets and gloated over their deaths, denying them burial.

"As soon as they caught them [Ananus and Jesus] they slew them, and then, standing upon their dead bodies, in way of jest, upbraided Ananus with his kindness to the people, and Jesus with his speech made to them from the wall. Nay, they proceeded to that degree of impiety, as to cast away their dead bodies without burials." (Wars 4.5.2)

2. ZEALOT-LED ISRAEL WAS THE BEAST OF REVELATION

A. Christ stated the stone of Daniel 2:34 would strike those who killed God's Son.

Compelling evidence that Israel was the 4th kingdom of Daniel 2 and therefore the 4th beast of Daniel 7 and therefore the beast of Revelation, came from Jesus himself. In Matthew 21:44 (also Lk 20:18), Jesus referred to the struck statue (nation) of Daniel 2:34 connecting it to the nation that would kill God's son. The first century chief priests and Pharisees to whom Jesus was speaking knew immediately that Jesus was speaking of them.

B. Jerusalem was the seat of the beast on which the fifth bowl of wrath was poured. Rev. 16:10

The 7-fold chastisement foretold by Moses in Leviticus 26 was for Israel, not for Rome. Therefore the pouring out of the fifth bowl on the seat of the beast indicates that Israel was the beast and, of course, Jerusalem was its seat. It was Jerusalem that experienced darkness, pain, anguish, and who cursed God refusing to repent, not Rome.

C. The epistles of the N.T. echo Daniel and Revelation in likening Judaizers to beasts who would be destroyed.

1. Paul said he, "fought with wild beasts at Ephesus." I Cor. 15:32 (see Acts 6:12, I Tim 1:3-4)
2. Peter said corrupt teachers were "Brute beasts made to be caught and destroyed, speak evil of the things they do not understand, and will utterly perish in their own corruption." 2 Pt 2:1
3. Jude said the false teachers and prophets were "brute beasts" among the saints and that Christ would come with "ten thousands of his angels to execute judgment on all." Jude 1:10, 14-15

D. Josephus referenced the zealots' beast-like nature, never the Romans.

1. "And this place [Jerusalem], which is adored by the habitable world...is trampled upon by these wild beasts born among ourselves." Spoken by Jesus of Gamaliel in Wars 4.4.3
2. In speaking of the powerful zealot leader, Simon Bar Giora, who, in a murderous rage, killed innocent bystanders, Josephus stated he was "like wild beasts when they are wounded...and was almost ready to taste the very flesh of their [victims] dead bodies." Wars 4.9.8
3. Regarding the three zealot factions fighting each other, he likened them to "a wild beast grown mad, which, for want of food from abroad, fell now upon eating its own flesh." Wars 5.1.1

3. THE NATIONS WHO TRAMPLED JERUSALEM FOR 3.5 YEARS WERE THE ZEALOTS AND THEIR ALLIES. The Romans did not enter the city until the siege in AD 70.

A. "Goy" is the Hebrew word for people or nation [#1471]. It is applied, at times, to Israel: 'Ye shall be unto Me...a holy nation' [#1471]." Ex. 19:6. "I will make of you a great nation [#1471]." Gen 12:2. Israel was divided into various "nations" (plural) under the Roman occupation.

B. Jesus ben Gamaliel said of Jerusalem, "And this place, which is adored by the habitable world, and honored by such as only know it by report, as far as the ends of the earth, is trampled upon by these wild beasts born among ourselves." (Wars 4.4.3).

C. Matthew 4:15-16 calls Galilee, "Galilee of the gentiles." A good share of the zealot leaders, as well as followers, came from Galilee, a hot-bed of zealotry, in addition to other districts external to Judea.

D. Criminals came from all over the land to join the lawless zealots. "[T]he captains of these troops of robbers, ... became a band of wickedness and all together crept into Jerusalem...There were besides these other robbers that came out of the country, and came into the city, and joining to them those that were worse than themselves ...". (Wars 4.3.2-4)

E. We see Israel referenced as a plurality of nations for example, in Acts 2:8-11.

UNSOLVED ISSUE: We have no record of anything pertaining to the following passage.

"And after the three days and a half, a spirit of life from God did enter into them, and they stood upon their feet, and great fear fell upon those beholding them, and they heard a great voice out of the heaven saying to them, 'Come up hither;' and they went up to the heaven in the cloud, and their enemies beheld them." Rev. 11:11-12.

FOR FURTHER STUDY:

1. Adam Maarschalk's website: Pursuing Truth (www.adammaarschalk.com)—find "Beast of Revelation" at the top of the page.
2. Read the entire "two witnesses" event: Josephus's Wars of the Jews, Book 4 Chapters 3 to 6 (only 13 pages total).
3. See Fact sheet/video 28 for further discussion of the identity of the Beast.
4. See Fact sheet/video 26 for a study aid in reading Josephus' "Wars of the Jews".