

# Apostle John and Prophet Ezekiel as the Two Witnesses

A theory by Terry Wolfe (wolfpox.com)

Author of *Maybe Everyone Is Wrong: Revelations, Conspiracy, and the Kingdom of Heaven*

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**Note:** Nobody really knows who the two witnesses of Revelation will be. All we can do is speculate using the clues given. Anyone who claims to know is a deceiver, because only God knows.

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## Logic of why the Apostle John may be one of the two witnesses

Revelation contains a mystery within a mystery when it comes to the mighty angel who speaks with seven thunders, and the little scroll the Apostle John is supposed to eat in the vision.

For the majority of the text John is allowed to write everything he sees. But there is a strange moment in the story when he is forbidden from writing down what the seven thunders of the mighty angel speaks. He is specifically told to seal them up and not write them. For the majority of the text he is also simply an observer in the story, but another strange moment happens when he is directly told to interact with the mighty angel and take the scroll.

The mighty angel himself speaks to John as if he were a participant in the prophetic events that will unfold next, telling him that he must again prophesy (or, we could say, he must “witness” to them) in front of many peoples, nations, languages, and rulers.

Let’s pause to look at the relevant verses before we continue:

*(Revelation 10 excerpts)*

*Now when the seven thunders spoke, I was about to write. But I heard a voice from heaven saying, "Seal up the things which the seven thunders said, and after these things you shall write." ... Then the voice which I heard from heaven was speaking with me again and saying, "Go, take the little scroll which was open in the hand of the angel standing on the sea and on the land."*

*And I went to the angel, saying to him to give to me the little scroll. ... And they said to me, "You must prophesy again over many peoples, nations, languages, and kings."*

John not only takes the little scroll from the mighty angel, but is instructed to eat it. We are never told what the little scroll says, nor what the seven thunders said! This puts John in a strange predicament if you think about it: the book of Revelation itself is not the fulfillment of this command John receives. It can't be, because the crucial information he received was not allowed to be written! John never spoke to a multitude of people after writing Revelation either. That means he died without giving this prophecy. So when will he ever fulfill this command from the angel? It has yet to happen, but it would if he returned as one of the two witnesses.

Immediately afterward, he is given a measuring stick and is commanded to go to the temple (in Jerusalem, no doubt) to measure it and the people worshipping there, but not the area for the Gentiles. This is something prophets would do who visited Jerusalem, in order to evaluate God's people and warn them about judgment and future events, but John is the one doing it in the scene. This puts him in the role of a prophet who is about to be sent to the people of God.

Let's look at those verses:

*(Rev 10 and 11 excerpts)*

*And I went to the angel, saying to him to give to me the little scroll. And he said to me, "Take it and eat it up; and it shall make your stomach bitter, but it shall be as sweet as honey in your mouth." Then I took the scroll out of the angel's hand and ate it, and it was as sweet as honey in my mouth. And when I ate it, my stomach was made bitter. ...*

*Then a reed was given to me like a rod, saying, "Rise and measure the temple of God, the altar, and those who worship in it. But leave out the outer court of the temple, and do not measure it, because it has been given to the Gentiles.*

There is a very important word used in this passage of Revelation that nobody notices. We must examine it.

When John is first commanded to measure the temple he is not only told to “go” (*hupagō*) like when he was told to approach the mighty angel, but is instead told to “rise” (*egeirō*) which is very special Greek word. It is used for somebody **being resurrected from the dead** or brought back to life. This indicates John is being brought back to life in order to measure the temple and the people inside! He is not simply going there in a vision, but will be required to rise and measure it in real flesh.

It is immediately after John “rises” that the two witnesses are introduced into the story. They give their prophecies to many peoples, nations, languages, and rulers. This would fulfill the command just barely given to John in the narrative, which he would otherwise be unable to obey because he died thousands of years ago without getting the chance!

***Egeirō*** (*G1453, Thayer's definition*)

1) *to arouse, cause to rise*

1a) *to arouse from sleep, to awake*

1b) *to arouse from the sleep of death, to recall the dead to life*

When John eats the little scroll it is sweet in his mouth, but it becomes bitter in his stomach. This is exactly how Ezekiel reacted when he also had to eat a special scroll. It was given to him by God before he was sent to prophesy terrible warnings to Jerusalem:

*(Ezekiel 3 excerpts)*

*And he said to me, "Son of man, what you find, eat! Eat this scroll, and go, speak to the house of Israel." And I opened my mouth, and he gave me this scroll to eat, and he said to me, "Son of man, you must give your stomach this to eat, and you must fill your belly with this scroll that I am giving to you." And I ate, and it became like sweet honey in my mouth. And he said to me, "Son of man, come! Go to the house of Israel, and you must speak to them with my words. ... And the Spirit lifted me and took me, and I went in bitterness in the heat of my spirit, and the hand of Yahweh was strong on me.*

Speaking of Ezekiel, let's examine his credentials to be one of the two witnesses. You may be surprised at how fitting it is.

## **Logic of why the Prophet Ezekiel may be one of the two witnesses**

Ezekiel and John share a unique connection, because they both were given a scroll to eat by God that was sweet in the mouth, but became "bitter" as they need to warn Jerusalem. This is what the two witnesses will have to do again in the future when they come to judge Israel and the world.

Ezekiel and John are the only two prophets who receive information about Gog and Magog as well. "Gog and Magog" is actually not a reference to any ancient people that scholars know about, nor is it a reference to modern day nations, but only an end-time vision. In fact, it only takes place after the 1,000 year kingdom on earth that Jesus will establish when he comes back to save Israel from the ungodly nations. Ezekiel and John would be in a unique position to share the information they were given about this in the future.

Furthermore, Ezekiel was given a very special vision of the final temple, and this description goes on for several chapters, with an extensive description of its design, function, and destiny. The prophecy about the final temple is mentioned by Ezekiel immediately after the description of how the Lord will destroy Gog and Magog, connecting the final battle to this wonderful establishment of Zion. Since this is such a misunderstood prophecy, it would be fitting if Ezekiel himself came back to teach the Israelites about why their temple was not the one he described, but there would need to be a final one set up by Christ:

*(Ezekiel 39 and 40 excerpts)*

*"And I will send fire against Magog and among the people inhabiting the coastlands in safety, and they will know that I am Yahweh. ... and I will not let the name of my holiness be profaned anymore, and the nations will know that I am Yahweh, the holy one in Israel. ... And the house of Israel will know that I am Yahweh their God from that day and beyond, and the nations will know that because of their guilt the house of Israel went into exile ... Now I will restore the fortunes of Jacob, and I will have compassion on all of the house of Israel" ... He brought me to the land of Israel and put me on a very high mountain, and on it was something like a structure of a city to the south. And he brought me there, and look, there was a man whose appearance was like the appearance of bronze, and a cord of linen was in his hand and a reed for measurement; he was standing in the gate. And the man spoke to me, "Son of man, look with your eyes and listen with your ears and apply your heart to all that I am showing you, for you were brought here in order to show you this; tell all that you are seeing to the house of Israel."*

*And there was a wall on the outside of the temple all the way around it, and in the hand of the man the reed for measurement was six long cubits, according to the cubit and a handbreadth, and he measured the width of the outer wall as one reed, and the height as one reed.*

Notice that Ezekiel receives a "reed" to measure the temple with? This is exactly like the Apostle John does in Revelation 11. John also describes fire coming down from heaven to consume Gog and Magog:

*(Revelation 20 excerpts)*

*And when the thousand years are completed, Satan will be released from his prison and he will go out to deceive the nations that are at the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to assemble them for battle, whose number is like the sand of the sea. And they went up on the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the fortified camp of the saints and the beloved city, and fire came down from heaven and consumed them.*

## Conclusion

I believe far too much emphasis is placed on these two witnesses being “the two olive trees and the two lampstands that stand before the Lord of the earth” (Rev 11:4) because people assume this is describing their **eternal role** in God’s plan, but I reject that assumption. I have concluded that they only serve as the olive trees and lampstands **during the time period they are witnessing**, which makes much more sense in the context of the story anyway. It is saying that they are the mouthpieces for the true covenants of God at that time, the old and the new.

John was one of the initial twelve Apostles, he is a Jew, he was the beloved of Jesus, the one who trusted the most fully in him and showed him the most respect, and the one who personally saw him on the cross. He witnessed the water and blood pour out of Jesus, and was not ashamed of his crucifixion. He is the one Jesus hinted might live to see him return:

*(John 21:20-24)*

*Peter turned and saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following them (who also leaned back on his chest at the dinner and said, "Lord, who is the one betraying you?") So when he saw this one, Peter said to Jesus, "Lord, but what about this one?" Jesus said to him, "If I want him to remain until I come, what is that to you? You follow me!" So this saying went out to the brothers that that disciple would not die. But Jesus did not say to him that he would not die, but "If I want him to remain until I come, what is that to you?" This is the disciple who is testifying about these things, and who has written down these things. And we know that his testimony is true.*

If John was brought back to life to be one of the two witnesses, he would end up getting killed by the Beast system (Rev 11) but then, after three days, God will raise him up again! That means John would get raised up from the dead twice, and then remain alive until Jesus comes back!

God only knows what will happen, but here we have many interesting and unique connections between John and Ezekiel related to the final warnings to Israel, the temple in Israel, and Gog and Magog.

You can email me here: [maybewrong@protonmail.com](mailto:maybewrong@protonmail.com)