CORNERSTONE CONNECTIONS

AUGUST 22 2026

Scripture Story: Revelation 11:1-14.
Commentary: *The Great Controversy* (or *Love Under Fire*), chapter 15.

two witnesses



Photo by A Truman

flashlight

"The suppression of the Scriptures during the period of papal supremacy was foretold by the prophets; and the Revelator points also to the terrible results that were to accrue especially to France from the domination of the 'man of sin'" (*The Great Controversy,* p. 266).

key text

"And I will give power to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy one thousand two hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth."

(Revelation 11:3, NKJV)

what do you think?

Either/Or

Choose one of the positions given and explain why you think the statement is true.

Which is worse, openly opposing the Bible because you believe it is false or continually neglecting God's Word even though you know it is true and life-giving?

Which position did you take? Explain.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

did you know?

Throughout history there have been those who have tried to silence God's message of love. But the Bible continues to speak to us. In spite of the fact that throughout history many have sought to defame or flame the Bible out of existence, God's Word has now been translated into more than 438 different languages.



INTO THE STORY

"Then I was given a reed like a measuring rod. And the angel stood, saying, 'Rise and measure the temple of God, the altar, and those who worship there. But leave out the court which is outside the temple, and do not measure it, for it has been given to the Gentiles. And they will tread the holy city underfoot for forty-two months. And I will give power to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy one thousand two hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth.'

"These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands standing before the God of the earth. And if anyone wants to harm them, fire proceeds from their mouth and devours their enemies. And if anyone wants to harm them, he must be killed in this manner. These have power to shut heaven, so that no rain falls in the days of their prophecy; and they have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to strike the earth with all plagues, as often as they desire.

"When they finish their testimony, the beast that ascends out of the bottomless pit will make war against them, overcome them, and kill them. And their dead bodies will lie in the street of the great city which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. Then those from the peoples, tribes, tongues, and nations will see their dead bodies three-and-a-half days, and not allow their dead bodies to be put into graves. And those who dwell on the earth will rejoice over them, make merry, and send gifts to one another, because these two prophets tormented those who dwell on the earth.

"Now after the three-and-a-half days the breath of life from God entered them, and they stood on their feet, and great fear fell on those who saw them. And they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, 'Come up here.' And they ascended to heaven in a cloud, and their enemies saw them. In the same hour there was a great earthquake, and a tenth of the city fell. In the earthquake seven thousand people were killed, and the rest were afraid and gave glory to the God of heaven.

"The second woe is past. Behold, the third woe is coming quickly."

(Revelation 11:1-14, NKJV)

OUT OF THE STORY

As you read this prophetic passage in Revelation 11, first know that it is the story of God's people who emerge from a dark season in earth's history.

What are some basic themes that you think are prominent in this passage?

Make a list of words and phrases that you don't understand.

Who are the two witnesses and why are they mentioned?

Why are they "clothed in sackcloth"?

What is the significance of the mention of the "forty-two months" and the "one thousand two hundred and sixty days"?

Whom do "Sodom" and "Egypt" represent? Why are they linked with Jerusalem, particularly where "the Lord was crucified"?

What are some examples from Scripture of open rebellion against God and His Word?

punch lines

"This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but people loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil" **(John 3:19, NIV).**

"The fool says in his heart, 'There is no God.' They are corrupt, their deeds are vile; there is no one who does good" **(Psalm 14:1, NIV).**

"Since they hated knowledge and did not choose to fear the Lord. Since they would not accept my advice and spurned my rebuke, they will eat the fruit of their ways and be filled with the fruit of their schemes" **(Proverbs 1:29-31, NIV).**

"For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through the endurance taught in the Scriptures and the encouragement they provide we might have hope" **(Romans 15:4, NIV).**

"The grass withers and the flowers fall, because the breath of the Lord blows on them. Surely the people are grass. The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God endures forever" **(Isaiah 40:7, 8, NIV).**

further insight

"The Old and the New Testament. Both are important testimonies to the origin and perpetuity of the law of God. Both are witnesses also to the plan of salvation."

—Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy,* p. 267

"The written word, the law of God, will measure the character of every man."—Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy,* p. 268

Sabbath

Read Psalm 14:1.

Read and respond to the activity in the *What Do You Think?* section of this week's lesson. Which position did you choose to defend—to defame or to be disinterested in what God says in His Word? Both sides are troubling, but which viewpoint seems harder to change?

In Psalm 14:1 the Bible says, "The fool has said in his heart, 'There is no God'" (NKJV). But Elijah said to the people on Mt. Carmel, "'How long will you waver between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow him; but if Baal is God, follow him.' But the people said nothing" (1 Kings 18:21, NIV). What do you say?

Sunday

Read Isaiah 40:8.

As you read the *Into the Story* section and answer the questions in the *Out of the Story* section, you will notice another prophetic passage that requires a bit more study than a simple story in Scripture. This particular section is about a time in earth's history in which God's people are overshadowed for almost 1260 years by a power that deliberately resists God's Word and even some openly defy it. If you read chapter 15 in *The Great Controversy* you will find that the pieces of the prophetic puzzle fit tightly together. What do you think is the message God is trying to say to people today about the era in which atheism is popular?

Monday

Read Revelation 11:3.

The *Key Text* from this week's lesson is found in Revelation 11:3 where God says: "And I will give power to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy one thousand two hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth" (NKJV). The "two witnesses" are the messages of the Old and New Testaments, and some would even add the two groups of people who testify in both eras (OT and NT) about God and His plan of salvation. Whom do you know who has a deep love for the Old Testament in a way that comes out of their life and their conversation? Think of another witness, or someone you know, who is a real fan of the New Testament. How does their devotion to God's Word show up in their lives?

Tuesday

Read Revelation 22:17-19.

Read the quote from *The Great Controversy*, which summarizes the effect of ignoring or downplaying God's message to people in Scripture. After reading the chapter in *The Great Controversy*, how do you see this kind of thinking and behavior showing up in today's world? Even though God's Word is spreading around the world, so is the sentiment that there is no God and people are on their own. What do you think is the best way to show evidence of God's existence to the world?

Wednesday

As you read the passages listed in the *Punch Lines* section of this week's lesson, which verse speaks most prominently to you today? Think of stories in the Bible that illustrate the sentiments in each verse. Are there people in your life who either do not believe in God or live as though God were not real? Pray for them today that their hearts might be softened or quickened to be open to what God longs to do in their life through His Word, as it says in Isaiah 50:4: "The Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary" (KJV).

Thursday

Read John 13:34, 35.

Think of the two types of people mentioned in this week's lesson: the apathetic and the atheistic. What acts of kindness or service to others will soften their hearts? What can you do this week for others that might demonstrate to the atheist that God does exist? You don't know who is watching, so just be faithful. Also, how might your passion for God's Word awaken someone whose spiritual life is sleepy? Think about starting a Bible study/prayer small group or a service team and invite others to join you.

Friday

Read 1 Timothy 4:12.

Think about how God has continually brought people through troubled seasons. God has allowed people, world powers, and misguided institutions to have their way for a time, but He has never restricted the influence of individuals to share what He is like to the world. Reflect on those people who have withstood persecution and isolation for the cause of God. How can you be counted among their number?

this week's reading*

The Great Controversy (or *Love Under Fire),* chapter 15.

**Love Under Fire* is a special adaptation of *The Great Controversy*, created for you by the Ellen G. White Estate and Pacific Press. Get more information about it at http://www.cornerstoneconnections.net/article/191/about-us/conflict-of-the-ages-companion-books#.URlhF1rBO9s. By following the weekly reading plan, you will read at least one book of the Conflict of the Ages Series each year.