

A light unto my path  
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Some words breathed by God are hard to understand. Difficulty can arise on more than one level leading to misunderstanding. The first level is always the culture of the word. My bride and I live in a rural area where some neighbors travel by horse. If our neighbor goes to town we know it before they pass our house. We hear the horse clopping along and the steel wheels on the buggy after it turns off the lane onto the highway and crossing the steel bridge before it comes past our house. Our neighbor must travel in darkness, if the sun has not risen or has set. Moon and stars are the only light for our neighbor's path in the dark. Street lights, front porch lights, headlights on cars or trucks, and hand held flashlights keep many city folk from ever giving thought to needing a light to travel in the dark. This makes thoughts of the psalmist foreign when he describes words breathed by God are; a lamp unto my feet, and light unto my path (Psalm 119 : 105 ASV). Culture can lead to misunderstanding.

Seeking sanctuary from the elements in caves and structures like tents, tabernacles, or homes, left man in the dark if the sun had not risen or had set. Darkness has been a problem for a long time. Light chases darkness. Lamps have been used for thousands of years to chase darkness from where man dwells.

A lamp stands on the floor or sits upon a table. It's a shaft with one or more bulbs atop covered by a shade, a switch turns on the bulb(s) and chases away darkness. Yet, they were not always this way. In your minds eye picture Aladdins Lamp. It looked more like a tea pot than today's lamp. It had a handle on one end, a spout on the other. In the center was a bowl with a lid. A wick was put through the spout with the excess coiled in the bowl. Olive oil in the bowl covered the wick. The spout was designed to prevent olive oil from flowing out. The wick hung out the spout. The lid was put in place and the lamp set aside to allow the olive oil to saturate the wick. When the wick sticking out the

spout was lighted the flame was adjusted or trimmed to produce light without black smoke rising from the flame. Thoughts of trimming a lamp are foreign. We chase darkness by flipping a wall switch or turning a knob. Culture is misleading and leads to misunderstanding.

Text: Matthew 25: 1-13 ASV

Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, who took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were foolish, and five were wise. For the foolish, when they took their lamps, took no oil with them: but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. Now while the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept. At midnight there is a cry, Behold, the bridegroom! Come ye forth to meet him. Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are going out. But the wise answered, saying, Peradventure there will not be enough for us and you: go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. And while they went away to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage feast: and the door was shut. Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not. Watch therefore, for ye know not the day nor the hour.

Word choice can lead to misunderstanding. Candles are made from wax or rendered animals, covering a wick. Candles and lamps were used by ancients to chase the darkness. The menorah is the seven branched lamp of the Tabernacle and Temple. Yet, the ASV and KJV translate it candlestick.

Text: Exodus 25: 31-40 ASV

And thou shalt make a candlestick of pure gold: of beaten work shall the candlestick be made, even its base, and its shaft; its cups, its knops, and its flowers, shall be of one piece with it: and there shall be six branches going out of the sides thereof; three branches of the

candlestick out of the one side thereof, and three branches of the candlestick out of the other side thereof: three cups made like almond-blossoms in one branch, a knop and a flower; and three cups made like almond-blossoms in the other branch, a knop and a flower: so for the six branches going out of the candlestick: and in the candlestick four cups made like almond-blossoms, the knops thereof, and the flowers thereof; and a knop under two branches of one piece with it, and a knop under two branches of one piece with it, and a knop under two branches of one piece with it, for the six branches going out of the candlestick. Their knops and their branches shall be of one piece with it; the whole of it one beaten work of pure gold. And thou shalt make the lamps thereof, seven: and they shall light the lamps thereof, to give light over against it. And the snuffers thereof, and the snuffdishes thereof, shall be of pure gold. Of a talent of pure gold shall it be made, with all these vessels. And see that thou make them after their pattern, which hath been showed thee in the mount.

Jehovah had invited Moses, Aaron, Nadab, Abihu, and seventy elders of Israel upon Mt. Sinai to worship. Moses alone came near Jehovah (Exodus 24: 1-2 ASV), seeing with his own eyes seven lamps, the snuffers, and the snuffdishes. Be certain the menorah is a lamp. The children of Israel, [shall] bring pure olive oil beaten for the light, to cause a lamp to burn. Aaron shall keep it in order from evening to morning before Jehovah continually, for ever, throughout your generations (Leviticus 24: 2-3 ASV). When Aaron lighteth the lamps at even, he shall burn incense before Jehovah (Exodus 30: 8 ASV). Every evening burn sweet incense. The showbread set upon the table; and the candlestick of gold with the lamps burn every evening (II Chronicles 13: 11 ASV). The lamp of God was not yet gone out, and Samuel laid down to sleep, in the temple of Jehovah, where the ark was (I Samuel 3: 3 ASV). Neither do men light a lamp, and put it under the bushel, but on the stand; and it shineth unto all that are in the house. So let your light shine before men; that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven (Matthew 5: 15-16 ASV).

Standing 60" tall and 42" across the menorah stood giving light in the temple of Jehovah, where the ark was. A lamp unto the feet, and light unto the path of the Hebrew nation. A statute under the first covenant, in Old Testament times, no longer is the menorah light of the world. Jesus spake, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in the darkness, but shall have the light of life (John 8: 12 ASV).

So when Jesus threatened to remove the lampstand, He was warning that this church would loose its authority and right to function in the courts of heaven. The lampstand speaks of identity and jurisdiction.

Text: Zechariah 4: 1-6 ASV

And the angel that talked with me came again, and waked me, as a man that is wakened out of his sleep. And he said unto me, What seest thou? And I said, I have seen, and, behold, a candlestick all of gold, with its bowl upon the top of it, and its seven lamps thereon; there are seven pipes to each of the lamps, which are upon the top thereof; and two olive-trees by it, one upon the right side of the bowl, and the other upon the left side thereof. And I answered and spake to the angel that talked with me, saying, What are these, my lord? Then the angel that talked with me answered and said unto me, Knowest thou not what these are? And I said, No, my lord. Then he answered and spake unto me, saying, This is the word of Jehovah unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith Jehovah of hosts.

Two olive trees fueling seven lamps with perpetual oil, speak of the anointing empowering the Church. Focus on the two olive trees is given to John in the Revelation. I will give 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 Lord of the earth. And if any man desireth to hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth and devoureth their enemies; and if any man shall desire to hurt them, in this manner

must he be killed. These have the power to shut the heaven, that it rain not during the days of their prophecy: and they have power over the waters to turn them into blood, and to smite the earth with every plague, as often as they shall desire (Revelation 11: 3-6 ASV). These two witnesses are the two olive trees feeding the lamps. Moses and Elijah are the anointing for the lamps. Moses turned water to blood and struck Egypt with plagues while Elijah shut the heavens and did not allow it to rain. The purpose of both prophets was to affect nations. Moses delivered a nation through his ministry while Elijah turned a nation back to God. Each carried anointing and authority.

Anointing and authority flows out of the olive trees feeding the lamp of the church. Jesus is threatening to remove their recognized place in Heaven. Remember therefore when thou art fallen, and repent and do the first works; else I come to thee, and move thy candlestick out of its place, except thou repent (Revelation 2: 5 ASV). Still be deemed a church on earth, they would not be recognized in Heaven.

Such is the case today. Fellowships may be called churches on earth. They are not as far as heaven is concerned. They are no longer registered in Heaven! These are they who are hidden rocks in your love-feasts when they feast with you, shepherds that without fear feed themselves; clouds without water, carried along by winds; autumn leaves without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots; wild waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, for whom the blackness of darkness hath been reserved for ever (Jude 1: 12-13 ASV).

We must be recognized in Heaven if we are to function in the kingdom of God. Now I beseech thee, love one another. This is love, we should walk after His commandments. Even as ye heard from the beginning. Ye should walk in it. Many deceivers are in the world, even they that confess not that Jesus Christ cometh in the flesh. This is the deceiver and the antichrist. Look to yourselves, lose not the things which we have wrought, but receive a full reward (II John 5-8 ASV).