

Revelation 1:12-13 And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks; 13 And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man...

Revelation 1:20b The mystery of the...seven golden candlesticks. The...seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches.

## REVIEW

The lampstand's oil, burning to produce light, symbolizes the Holy Spirit of Christ at work in His church, giving power/strength for the church to proclaim the word of God and believe the word of God and obey the word of God

The lampstand symbolizes the Church, with the Lord Jesus in it by His Spirit, empowering the church to believe, proclaim, and obey His Word.

## PROVIDING THE OIL FOR THE LAMPS

Leviticus 24:1-4 Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: (2) "Command the children of Israel that they bring to you pure oil of pressed olives for the light, to make the lamps burn continually. (3) Outside the veil of the Testimony, in the tabernacle of meeting, Aaron shall be in charge of it from evening until morning before the LORD continually; it shall be a statute forever in your generations. (4) He shall be in charge of the lamps on the pure gold lampstand before the LORD continually.

What happened?

## Background

-The kings, priests, and people of Israel were idolatrous (2 Chronicles 36:11-16)

-God sent Nebuchadnezzar (2 Chronicles 36:17-21) to kill many of the people and to take others into exile in Babylon

-This is called the Babylonian exile

-So we say "pre-exilic" and "post-exilic"

-King Cyrus made a new policy toward the Jews, sending them back to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple (2 Chronicles 36:22-23)

-A company of Jews returned to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple (Ezra 2:64)

-42,360 total total men

-from the building of Solomon's temple

1 Chronicles 21:5 And Joab gave the sum of the number of the people unto David. And all they of Israel were a thousand thousand and an hundred thousand men that drew sword: and Judah was four hundred threescore and ten thousand men that drew sword.

-1,100,000 + 470,00 = 1,570,000

-42,360 is 2.7% of that

2 Chronicles 2:17-18 And Solomon numbered all the strangers that were in the land of Israel, after the numbering wherewith David his father had numbered them; and they were found an hundred and fifty thousand and three thousand and six hundred. 18 And he set threescore and ten thousand of them to be bearers of burdens, and fourscore thousand to be hewers in the mountain, and three thousand and six hundred overseers to set the people a work.

-153,600 foreign workers

-70,000 to carry burdens

-80,000 to cut stone

-3,600 to oversee

-42,360 is 28% of that

Ezra 6:17 And offered at the dedication of this house of God an hundred bullocks, two hundred rams, four hundred lambs; and for a sin offering for all Israel, twelve he goats, according to the number of the tribes of Israel.

-100 cattle, 600 sheep, 12 goats

-712 animals total

2 Chronicles 7:5 And king Solomon offered a sacrifice of twenty and two thousand oxen, and an hundred and twenty thousand sheep: so the king and all the people dedicated the house of God.

-22,000 cattle, 120,000 sheep

-132,000 animals total

-712 is half of one percent of that

-The people returned and began to build the temple, laying the foundation (Ezra 3:8-12)

-the old men who had seen the previous temple wept at the very poor foundation of the new temple

-The Samaritans opposed the project, gained the support of the government, and forced the people to stop building (Ezra 4:1-24)

-Haggai and Zechariah prophesied that the people should resume building the temple (Ezra 5:1-2), and the people did so, under the leadership of Zerubbabel 520 B.C.

### **Prophecy by Haggai and Zechariah**

-Haggai 2:1-5 In the seventh month, in the one and twentieth day of the month, came the word of the LORD by the prophet Haggai, saying, 2 Speak now to Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest, and to the residue of the people, saying, 3 Who is left among you that saw this house in her first glory? and how do ye see it now? is it not in your eyes in comparison of it as nothing? 4 Yet now be strong, O Zerubbabel, saith the LORD; and be strong, O Joshua, son of Josedech, the high priest; and be strong, all ye people of the land, saith the LORD, and work: for I am with you, saith the LORD of hosts: 5 According to the word that I covenanted with you when ye came out of Egypt, so my spirit remaineth among you: fear ye not.

-not figurative language here, but literal

-the temple you are building seems like nothing

-be strong

-work, for I am with you, saith the LORD

-my Spirit remaineth among you

-fear not

Zechariah 4:1-7 Now the angel who talked with me came back and wakened me, as a man who is wakened out of his sleep. (2) And he said to me, "What do you see?" So I said, "I am looking, and there is a lampstand of solid gold with a bowl on top of it, and on the stand seven lamps with seven pipes to the seven lamps. (3) Two olive trees are by it, one at the right of the bowl and the other at its left." (4) So I answered and spoke to the angel who talked with me, saying, "What are these, my lord?" (5) Then the angel who talked with me answered and said to me, "Do you not know what these are?" And I said, "No, my lord." (6) So he answered and said to me: "This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel: 'Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,' Says the LORD of hosts. (7) 'Who are you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you shall become a plain! And he shall bring forth the capstone With shouts of "Grace, grace to it!" ' "

-this is figurative language, but giving essentially the same message as that given in plain language by Haggai

4:2-3 See that there is a plumbing system to bring oil to the lamps from a reservoir, and the reservoir is filled directly from two olive trees (ref. verse 12)

4:4 Zechariah asks what this plumbing system for fueling the lamps represents  
-in this answer we find more help understanding what was meant by the lampstand in the tabernacle all along

4:6-7 See that Zerubbabel is building God's temple not with human strength, but by the power of God's Spirit, so that no obstacle will be big enough to stop him

Revelation 3:8 I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name.

-ESV, CSB but little power

Revelation 3:10-12 Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. 11 Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown. 12 Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name.

## CONCLUSION

Seeing the churches represented as candlesticks or lampstands tells us that  
-the Lord Jesus understands we feel tempted to fear or discouragement when we seem small, when we feel weak  
-His Holy Spirit is in us, strengthening us for faithfulness to Him  
-He is building us into His temple

Zechariah 4:8-10 Moreover the word of the LORD came to me, saying: (9) "The hands of Zerubbabel Have laid the foundation of this temple; His hands shall also finish it. Then you will know That the LORD of hosts has sent Me to you. (10) For who has despised the day of small things? For these seven rejoice to see The plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel. They are the eyes of the LORD, Which scan to and fro throughout the whole earth."

He who began a good work in you will be faithful to complete it, til the day of Christ.

APPLICATION from Calvin:

there is no reason why the church should turn its eyes here and there for help from men; for all abundance of blessings may be supplied by God alone . . . we are very foolish, when we look around us here and there, or vacillate, or when . . . various hopes, and fears, and anxieties affect us; for we ought to be so dependent on God alone, as to be fully persuaded that his grace is sufficient for us . . . we ought fully to confide in God alone, though poverty and want may surround us on every side.

Henry:

This candlestick had one bowl, or common receiver, on the top, into which oil was continually dropping, and from it, by seven secret pipes, or passages, it was diffused to the seven lamps, so that, without any further care, they received oil as fast as they wasted it (as in those which we call fountain-ink-horns, or fountain-pens); they never wanted, nor were ever glutted, and so kept always burning clear. And the bowl too was continually supplied, without any care or attendance of man; for (Zec\_4:3) he saw two olive-trees, one on each side the candlestick, that were so fat and fruitful that of their own accord they poured plenty of oil continually into the bowl, which by two larger pipes (Zec\_4:12) dispersed the oil to smaller ones and so to the lamps; so that nobody needed to attend this candlestick, to furnish it with oil (it tarried not for man, nor waited for the sons of men), the scope of which is to show that God easily can, and often does, accomplish his gracious purposes concerning his church by his own wisdom and power, without any art or labour of man, and that though sometimes he makes use of instruments, yet he neither needs them nor is tied to them, but can do his work without them, and will rather than it shall be undone.

Henry (on Zechariah 4:2) "The church is a candlestick, set up for the enlightening of this dark world and the holding forth of the light of divine revelation to it."

2 Timothy 1:8-2:3 Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner, but share with me in the sufferings for the gospel according to the power of God, (9) who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began, (10) but has now been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel, (11) to which I was appointed a preacher, an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles. (12) For this reason I also suffer these things; nevertheless I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep what I have committed to Him until that Day. (13) Hold fast the pattern of sound words which you have heard from me, in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus. (14) That good thing which was committed to you, keep by the Holy Spirit who dwells in us. (15) This you know, that all those in Asia have turned away from me, among whom are Phygellus and Hermogenes. (16) The Lord grant mercy to the household of Onesiphorus, for he often refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain; (17) but when he arrived in Rome, he sought me out very zealously and found me. (18) The Lord grant to him that he may find mercy from the Lord in that Day--and you know very well how many ways he ministered to me at Ephesus. (2:1) You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. (2) And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also. (3) You therefore must endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

What is the situation?

1:8 Christians tempted to be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord because Paul in prison, and those who profess Christ subject to imprisonment and other kinds of suffering  
it is not socially acceptable to identify with Paul and his doctrine of Jesus Christ

it is not even legal; you can go to prison or even be executed for it  
1:12b Paul not ashamed  
1:15 Many Christians, possibly pastors, have turned away from Paul  
1:16 Some faithful men not turning away

What does Paul say should be done?

1:8b Share with me in the sufferings for the gospel  
1:13 Hold fast the pattern of sound words which you have heard from me  
in faith  
in love  
both of which are in Christ Jesus  
1:14 That good thing which was committed to you, keep  
2:2 the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses,  
commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also

How can that be done?

1:8c according to the power of God  
1:14b by the Holy Spirit who dwells in us  
2:1 in the grace that is in Christ Jesus

Just right in this passage, what is the pattern of sound words?

2 Timothy 1:8c-10 God, (9) who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began, (10) but has now been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel,

God has saved us

God has called us with a holy calling

Ephesians 4:1-3 I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, (2) with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, (3) endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

He did not do this according to our works

He did it according to His own purpose

He did it according to His own grace

His grace was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began

His grace has now been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ

Jesus Christ has abolished death

Jesus Christ has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel  
for that gospel, Paul was appointed a preacher, an apostle, and a teacher of  
the Gentiles