

Message Nine

Lighting the Lamps

MC Hymns: 791, 1122

Scripture Reading: Num. 8:1-4; Exo. 27:20-21; Rev. 1:4; 4:5; Psa. 73:16-17

- Num 8:1 Then Jehovah spoke to Moses, saying,
Num 8:2 Speak to Aaron and say to him, When you set up the lamps, the seven lamps will give light in front of the lampstand.
- Num 8:3 And Aaron did so; he set up its lamps to give light in front of the lampstand, as Jehovah had commanded Moses.
- Num 8:4 Now this was the workmanship of the lampstand, beaten work of gold; from its base to its flowers it was beaten work. According to the pattern which Jehovah had shown Moses, so he made the lampstand.
- Exo 27:20 And you shall command the children of Israel to bring to you pure oil of beaten olives for the light, to make the lamps burn continually.
- Exo 27:21 In the Tent of Meeting, outside the veil which is before the Testimony, Aaron and his sons shall maintain it in order from evening to morning before Jehovah; it shall be a perpetual statute to be observed throughout their generations by the children of Israel.
- Rev 1:4 John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace to you and peace from Him who is and who was and who is coming, and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne,
- Rev 4:5 And out of the throne come forth lightnings and voices and thunders. And there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God;
- Psa 73:16 When I considered this in order to understand it, / It was a troublesome task in my sight,
Psa 73:17 Until I went into the sanctuary of God; / Then I perceived their end.

I. Although many details regarding the Tent of Meeting were omitted in Numbers 8, God specifically instructed Aaron to light the lamps of the lampstand—vv. 1-4:

- Num 8 be omitted.
- Num 8:1 Then Jehovah spoke to Moses, saying,
Num 8:2 Speak to Aaron and say to him, When you set up the lamps, the seven lamps will give light in front of the lampstand.
- Num 8:3 And Aaron did so; he set up its lamps to give light in front of the lampstand, as Jehovah had commanded Moses.
- Num 8:4 Now this was the workmanship of the lampstand, beaten work of gold; from its base to its flowers it was beaten work. According to the pattern which Jehovah had shown Moses, so he made the lampstand.
- A. After the offering of the twelve tribes of Israel and the speaking of God in Numbers 7, God instructed Moses to light the lamps; Numbers 8:1-2 says, “Jehovah spoke to Moses, saying, ... When you set up the lamps, the seven lamps will give light in front of the lampstand”:
Num 7 be omitted.
1. The seven lamps, signifying the seven Spirits (Rev. 4:5), gave light in front of the lampstand, shining toward the middle of the tabernacle; thus, the shining of the lamps was in the right direction for serving and moving; at this point God’s people could begin to render their spiritual service to Him.
Rev 4:5 And out of the throne come forth lightnings and voices and thunders. And there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God;
 2. The unique purpose of lighting the lamps was for offering, fighting, and moving; offering, fighting, and moving all require light.
- B. Without the shining of the light, the children of Israel could not move, much less fight for God; therefore, as soon as they consecrated something to God as seen in Numbers 7, they immediately lit the lamps in order for the light to shine.
Num 7 be omitted.
- C. If God’s people consecrate something to God, He will shine among them, and they will have light; in order for God’s people to become His army, they must have light in order to

fight, walk, and serve—cf. Rom. 13:12, 14.

Rom 13:12 The night is far advanced, and the day has drawn near. Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the weapons of light.

Rom 13:14 But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh to fulfill its lusts.

II. The light of the lampstand is based on the strength of the priests' service:

- A. In 1 Samuel the lamp of God was about to go out because Eli the priest was weak and degraded—3:3.
- 1 Sam 3:3 And the lamp of God had not yet gone out. And Samuel lay in the temple of Jehovah, where the Ark of God was.
- B. The light in a local church cannot be bright unless we fulfill our priestly duty to burn the incense and light the lamps—Exo. 25:37; 27:20-21; 30:7-8; Acts 6:4; 1 Cor. 14:24-25.
- Exo 25:37 And you shall make its lamps, seven; and set up its lamps to give light to the area in front of it.
- Exo 27:20 And you shall command the children of Israel to bring to you pure oil of beaten olives for the light, to make the lamps burn continually.
- Exo 27:21 In the Tent of Meeting, outside the veil which is before the Testimony, Aaron and his sons shall maintain it in order from evening to morning before Jehovah; it shall be a perpetual statute to be observed throughout their generations by the children of Israel.
- Exo 30:7 And Aaron shall burn on it fragrant incense; every morning when he dresses the lamps he shall burn it.
- Exo 30:8 And when Aaron sets up the lamps at twilight, he shall burn it, a perpetual incense before Jehovah throughout your generations.
- Acts 6:4 But we will continue steadfastly in prayer and in the ministry of the word.
- 1 Cor 14:24 But if all prophesy and some unbeliever or unlearned person enters, he is convicted by all, he is examined by all;
- 1 Cor 14:25 The secrets of his heart become manifest; and so falling on his face, he will worship God, declaring that indeed God is among you.
- C. Numbers 7 ends with God speaking in the Tent of Meeting, and chapter 8 begins with God's continued speaking concerning the lighting of the lamps for light—7:89—8:3:
- Num 7 be omitted.
- Num 7:89 And when Moses went into the Tent of Meeting to speak with Him, he heard the voice speaking to him from above the expiation cover that was upon the Ark of the Testimony, from between the two cherubim; and he spoke to Him.
- Num 8:1 Then Jehovah spoke to Moses, saying,
- Num 8:2 Speak to Aaron and say to him, When you set up the lamps, the seven lamps will give light in front of the lampstand.
- Num 8:3 And Aaron did so; he set up its lamps to give light in front of the lampstand, as Jehovah had commanded Moses.
1. This sequence indicates that whenever God's word comes, His people receive light; thus, during the age of Eli the priest, when the word of Jehovah was rare, the lamps in the Holy Place were about to go out—1 Sam. 3:1-3; cf. Psalms 119:105, 130.
- 1 Sam 3:1 And the boy Samuel ministered to Jehovah before Eli. Now the word of Jehovah was rare in those days; visions were not widespread.
- 1 Sam 3:2 And at that time Eli lay in his place, and his eyesight had begun to grow dim, so that he could not see.
- 1 Sam 3:3 And the lamp of God had not yet gone out. And Samuel lay in the temple of Jehovah, where the Ark of God was.
- Psalms 119:105 Your word is a lamp to my feet / And a light to my path.
- Psalms 119:130 The opening of Your words gives light, / Imparting understanding to the simple.
2. Only when there is God's speaking in the church can light shine brightly among God's people; the ministering priests were able to minister and move because of the light of the lampstand—cf. Mal. 2:7.
- Mal 2:7 For the priest's lips should keep knowledge, and men should seek instruction from his mouth, for he is the messenger of Jehovah of hosts.

3. Moreover, the seven lamps giving light in the same direction signifies that even though each person has a distinct ministry in the Body, their direction is the same and their ministries are still one ministry—Col. 4:17; 2 Tim. 4:5; Acts 20:24.
 - Col 4:17 And say to Archippus, Take heed to the ministry which you have received in the Lord, that you fulfill it.
 - 2 Tim 4:5 But you, be sober in all things, suffer evil, do the work of an evangelist, fully accomplish your ministry.
 - Acts 20:24 But I consider my life of no account as if precious to myself, in order that I may finish my course and the ministry which I have received from the Lord Jesus to solemnly testify of the gospel of the grace of God.
4. For example, Paul had his ministry, Peter had his ministry, and John had his ministry; nevertheless, their direction was toward Christ; they testified for Christ together; their light shone out from Christ and shone toward Christ; hence, their ministries were one.

III. “You shall command the children of Israel to bring to you pure oil of beaten olives for the light, to make the lamps burn continually. In the Tent of Meeting, outside the veil which is before the Testimony, Aaron and his sons shall maintain it in order from evening to morning before Jehovah; it shall be a perpetual statute to be observed throughout their generations by the children of Israel”—Exo. 27:20-21:

- A. The olive tree signifies Christ (cf. Rom. 11:17, 24), and the oil of beaten olives signifies the Spirit of Christ produced through Christ’s process of incarnation, human living, crucifixion, and resurrection—cf. John 1:14; 1 Cor. 15:45b.
 - Rom 11:17 But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive tree, were grafted in among them and became a fellow partaker of the root of fatness of the olive tree,
 - Rom 11:24 For if you were cut off from what is by nature a wild olive tree and were grafted contrary to nature into the cultivated olive tree, how much more will these who are the natural branches be grafted into their own olive tree!
 - John 1:14 And the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us (and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only Begotten from the Father), full of grace and reality.
 - 1 Cor 15:45b ... the last Adam became a life-giving Spirit.
- B. *To make the lamps burn continually* means literally “to cause the light of a lamp to ascend”:
 1. The lampstand, signifying Christ as the embodiment of the Triune God, was made of pure gold (Exo. 25:31), but the wicks that burned to give off the light were of the plant life; in order to burn so that light would shine, the wicks had to be saturated with oil.
 - Exo 25:31 And you shall make a lampstand of pure gold. The lampstand with its base and its shaft shall be made of beaten work; its cups, its calyxes, and its blossom buds shall be of one piece with it.
 2. The wicks signify the uplifted humanity of Christ, which burns with the divine oil to shine out the divine light.
- C. The tabernacle as the Tent of Meeting, the place where God met with His redeemed people and spoke to them (Lev. 1:1), typifies the meeting of the church:
 - Lev 1:1 Then Jehovah called to Moses and spoke to him out of the Tent of Meeting, saying,
 1. Thus, in typology the lighting of the lamps points to the proper way to meet; everything done in the church meetings, whether praying, singing, praising, or prophesying, should cause the lamps to shine; this is to light the lamps in God’s sanctuary so that the light may swallow up the darkness—cf. John 1:5; Phil. 2:15-16a; Eph. 5:8-9.
 - John 1:5 And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.
 - Phil 2:15 That you may be blameless and guileless, children of God without blemish in

- the midst of a crooked and perverted generation, among whom you shine as luminaries in the world,
- Phil 2:16a Holding forth the word of life, ...
- Eph 5:8 For you were once darkness but are now light in the Lord; walk as children of light
- Eph 5:9 (For the fruit of the light consists in all goodness and righteousness and truth),
2. *Before the Testimony* means before the law in the Ark, which was behind the veil:
 - a. For the most part, the meeting of God's people is in the Holy Place, not in the Holy of Holies; however, we meet in the Holy Place with the expectation of entering the Holy of Holies.
 - b. The light from the lamps enables us to see the different aspects of Christ, signified by the items of furniture in the Holy Place, and also the way leading into the Holy of Holies, into the depths of Christ within God—cf. 1 Cor. 2:9-10.

1 Cor 2:9 But as it is written, "Things which eye has not seen and ear has not heard and which have not come up in man's heart; things which God has prepared for those who love Him."

1 Cor 2:10 But to us God has revealed them through the Spirit, for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God.
- D. The holy task of lighting the lamps was a service of holy persons, the priests, not of the common people:
1. According to the entire Bible, a priest is one who is possessed by God, filled with God, saturated with God, and living absolutely for God; furthermore, a priest had to be clothed with priestly garments (Exo. 28:2), which signify Christ lived out of the priesthood.

Exo 28:2 And you shall make holy garments for Aaron your brother, for glory and for beauty.
 2. The lighting of the lamps in the Holy Place requires the service of this kind of person—cf. 1 Pet. 2:5, 9; Rev. 1:6.

1 Pet 2:5 You yourselves also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house into a holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

1 Pet 2:9 But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people acquired for a possession, so that you may tell out the virtues of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;

Rev 1:6 And made us a kingdom, priests to His God and Father, to Him be the glory and the might forever and ever. Amen.
- E. The light in the Holy Place was not a natural light or a manmade light; it was a light that came from the golden lampstand, that is, from the divine nature of Christ.
- F. To experience the genuine lighting of the lamps in the church meetings, we must have Christ, the embodiment of the Triune God, as the lampstand, the divine nature as the gold, the uplifted humanity of Christ as the wick, and the Spirit of Christ as the oil with all the steps of Christ's process, and we must be holy people as the priests, clothed with the expression of Christ as the priestly garments.
- G. The priests were to maintain the lamps from evening to morning before Jehovah:
1. Nothing is said in Exodus 27:21 about the day; the present age is the night, not the day.

Exo 27:21 In the Tent of Meeting, outside the veil which is before the Testimony, Aaron and his sons shall maintain it in order from evening to morning before Jehovah; it shall be a perpetual statute to be observed throughout their generations by the children of Israel.
 2. Hence, we need the light to shine during this age of night until the day dawns—cf. Rom. 13:12; 2 Pet. 1:19.

Rom 13:12 The night is far advanced, and the day has drawn near. Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the weapons of light.

2 Pet 1:19 And we have the prophetic word made more firm, to which you do well to give

heed as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts;

IV. The seven lamps of the golden lampstand are the seven Spirits before God's throne, the seven lamps of fire burning before God's throne—Rev. 1:4; 4:5:

Rev 1:4 John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace to you and peace from Him who is and who was and who is coming, and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne,

Rev 4:5 And out of the throne come forth lightnings and voices and thunders. And there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God;

- A. In the universe God has a center of administration, which is His throne.
- B. God is administering and moving from His throne to execute His eternal policy.
- C. The seven lamps of fire burning before God's throne signifies that the seven lamps are absolutely related to God's administration, economy, and move.

V. To know God's administration and economy we must have the light of the golden lampstand from the seven shining and illuminating lamps:

- A. Natural light cannot help us to know God's economy, administration, and eternal purpose—21:23, 25; 22:5a.

Rev 21:23 And the city has no need of the sun or of the moon that they should shine in it, for the glory of God illumined it, and its lamp is the Lamb.

Rev 21:25 And its gates shall by no means be shut by day, for there will be no night there.

Rev 22:5a And night will be no more; and they have no need of the light of a lamp and of the light of the sun, for the Lord God will shine upon them; ...

- B. The light of the lampstand is the light in the Holy Place, which typifies the church.
- C. Once we enter into the realm of the church, we are enlightened to know God's eternal purpose, His heart's intention, and His economy, and we also know which path we should take for the journey before us toward God's goal.
- D. In God's sanctuary (in our spirit and in the church) we receive divine revelation and obtain the explanation to all our problems—Psa. 73:16-17.

Psa 73:16 When I considered this in order to understand it, / It was a troublesome task in my sight,

Psa 73:17 Until I went into the sanctuary of God; / Then I perceived their end.

VI. According to Revelation 4, the emphasis with the seven burning lamps of fire is on the move of God's administration:

Rev 4:1 After these things I saw, and behold, a door opened in heaven, and the first voice which I heard was like a trumpet speaking with me, saying, Come up here, and I will show you the things that must take place after these things.

Rev 4:2 Immediately I was in spirit; and behold, there was a throne set in heaven, and upon the throne there was One sitting;

Rev 4:3 And He who was sitting was like a jasper stone and a sardius in appearance, and there was a rainbow around the throne like an emerald in appearance.

Rev 4:4 And around the throne there were twenty-four thrones, and upon the thrones twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white garments, and upon their heads golden crowns.

Rev 4:5 And out of the throne come forth lightnings and voices and thunders. And there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God;

Rev 4:6 And before the throne there was as it were a glassy sea like crystal; and in the midst of the throne and around the throne, there were four living creatures full of eyes in front and behind.

Rev 4:7 And the first living creature was like a lion, and the second living creature like a calf, and the third living creature had a face like that of a man, and the fourth living creature was like a flying eagle.

Rev 4:8 And the four living creatures, each one of them having six wings apiece, are full of eyes around and within; and they have no rest day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God the Almighty, who was and who is and who is coming.

- Rev 4:9 And when the four living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to Him who sits upon the throne, to Him who lives forever and ever,
- Rev 4:10 The twenty-four elders will fall before Him who sits upon the throne and worship Him who lives forever and ever; and they will cast their crowns before the throne, saying,
- Rev 4:11 You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive the glory and the honor and the power, for You have created all things, and because of Your will they were, and were created.
- A. Christ carries out His mission as the Ruler of the kings of the earth by the seven burning Spirits before the throne to sovereignly control the world situation so that the environment might be fit for God's chosen people to receive His salvation—Acts 5:31; cf. 17:26-27; John 17:2; 2 Chron. 16:9.
- Acts 5:31 This One God has exalted to His right hand as Leader and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins.
- Acts 17:26 And He made from one every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, determining beforehand their appointed seasons and the boundaries of their dwelling,
- Acts 17:27 That they might seek God, if perhaps they might grope for Him and find Him, even though He is not far from each one of us;
- John 17:2 Even as You have given Him authority over all flesh to give eternal life to all whom You have given Him.
- 2 Chron 16:9 For the eyes of Jehovah run to and fro throughout all the earth to strengthen those whose heart is perfect toward Him. You have acted foolishly in this matter; hence from this time on you will have wars.
- B. The flame of the seven burning Spirits judges, purifies, and refines the church to produce the golden lampstands.
- C. The burning of the fiery lamps is not only for shining and burning but also for motivating us to rise up and take action for the carrying out of God's economy—Dan. 11:32b.
- Dan 11:32b ... But the people who know their God will show strength and take action.