

Golden Candlestick

#0046

Study Given by W. D. Frazee—December 7, 1979

In both the Old and New Testaments, we have symbols borrowed from the sanctuary. Moses was commanded to make a sanctuary on earth copied after the one in Heaven. There were two rooms in that tabernacle: the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place. In the second room, the only article of furniture was the golden ark with the mercy seat above and the golden cherubim looking down in reverent attention to the law beneath the mercy seat.

In the Holy Place, immediately before the veil separating the holy and the most holy, was the golden altar of incense. In front of that on the right was the table of shewbread, and on the left was the seven-branch candlestick with the lamps giving light by day and by night, where there were no windows there in the sanctuary.

It's that golden candlestick that I wish to study with you tonight. In both the Old and New Testament, its symbolism brings us precious lessons.

The angel asked Zechariah what he saw. God often asks questions to arrest our attention and get us to respond. The prophet said:

"I have looked, and behold a candlestick all of gold, with a bowl upon the top of it, and his seven lamps thereon, and seven pipes to the seven lamps, which are upon the top thereof..." Zechariah 4:2.

Do you get the picture? Seven-branch candlestick, a bowl above with the oil, communicating to the seven lamps, seven pipes to the seven lamps. And here we have an additional thought in the third verse:

"And two olive trees by it" Zechariah 4:3.

What are olive trees for? Well, to bear olives and from the olives comes the olive oil.

"Two olive trees by it, one upon the right side of the bowl, and the other upon the left side thereof" Zechariah 4:3.

So there was conversation, as this chapter goes on, between the angel and the prophet. What does all this mean? The essential meaning of it is given in the sixth verse:

"This is the word of the LORD unto Zerubbabel..."

One of the leaders of Israel at that time...

“...saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by My spirit,
saith the LORD of hosts” Zechariah 4:6.

As the candlestick is entirely dependent upon oil in order to give light, so God's church is entirely dependent upon the power of His Spirit to shine in good works.

In the visions of the different prophets—Moses, Daniel, Zachariah, John—there are variations in the descriptions of these different symbols. But each variation points to some special lesson. As John saw the candlesticks in this first chapter, he describes them as separate so that Christ is walking among them. But in the 20th verse, the dear Lord tells him what it means:

“The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches”
Revelation 1:20.

The number seven is often used to represent perfection or completeness. So this represents the church of Christ from beginning to end in all ages—the Gospel church. As seven is complete, so God's church is complete.

As the business of a candlestick is to give light, so God wants His church, His people, to give light.

“Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven” Matthew 5:14–16.

God's people then are to be what? Light. This agrees with Revelation 1:20 that the church is the candlestick. The seven candlesticks are the seven churches, and as the candlestick gives light, so the church is to give light. And notice, too, what the light is said to be: it said good works there in Matthew 5:16.

We don't have to be afraid of works provided they come from a Spirit-filled church. Otherwise, they're dead works, and there's no light in them. But if there is oil in the candlestick and if the oil is burning, if the wicks are kept trimmed, then there will be light in all the dwellings of the saints, and the church will indeed be as Christ says, “the light of the world.”

The oil represents the Holy Spirit (Zachariah 4:6). There are various expressions used to convey varied meanings, varied shades of meaning as to what this oil symbolizes. For example, in *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 419, the oil is called the golden oil of love. Which is it, love or is it the Holy Spirit? We'll resolve that problem with this text:

“And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us” Romans 5:5.

So the golden oil represents the Holy Spirit, and it represents love because the Holy Spirit sheds abroad the love of God in our hearts. We can no more think about God without love than we can think of light without illumination. God is light and in Him is love. So this is the golden oil of the Spirit or the golden oil of love. As the oil, burning in the candlestick, furnishes light, so the Holy Spirit, in the hearts of God's people, working in His church, is manifest in loving ministry.

“And I will give power 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 God of the earth” Revelation 11:3–4.

These are the two olive trees borrowed from Zechariah's vision of the fourth chapter, and they're also identified here as two candlesticks. Two olive trees, two candlesticks. They're also called two witnesses. These two witnesses are the Old Testament and the New Testament (*Great Controversy*, page 267). Let's put this together:

“Then said he, These are the two anointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth” Zechariah 4:14.

Now notice what is said here concerning the two olive trees. The angel is answering the question as to what these two olive trees are. That question has been raised in the 11th verse and the 12th verse. The prophet acknowledges in the 13th verse that he doesn't know what it means, so the angel tells him. By the way, it's a good thing sometimes for us, even if we're prophets, to say we don't know. That's the way to learn something. That's the way Zechariah did. And we learn by listening to what God says. Now look at that 14th verse and tell me who the two olive trees are.

[Audience responds] The two anointed ones.

The two anointed ones that stand by the Lord of the whole earth.

In the Mosaic tabernacle, how many cherubim were there above the mercy seat? Two of them: one on the right hand and one on the left. These are the two anointed angels that stand at the head of all the heavenly host. One of them is named Gabriel (Luke 1:19). I don't know the name of the other one. These two angels, one on either side of the throne of God, are especially the channel of communication. And as in the symbolism as the oil flowed from the olive trees through the golden pipes in order that the candlestick might be supplied with fuel, so from these holy angels, the leaders of the heavenly band, the Spirit of God is communicated to his human instrumentalities. And thus it was that all the Bible was written. So Peter says:

“For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man:
but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the
Holy Ghost” 2 Peter 1:21.

As the Holy Spirit, communicating to every member of the church is revealed in loving service, so the Holy Spirit is also revealed in the gifts of the Spirit, one of which is the prophetic gift. It is the inspiration of the prophetic gift that gave us the Bible. So the fruits of the Spirit and the gifts of the Spirit are both dependent on the presence of the Spirit in the church. The gifts of the Spirit are divided to every man severally as he will, but the fruits of the Spirit are to be manifest in every member of the church.

The fruits of the Spirit are love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, faith, meekness, and temperance. The first one mentioned is love, and we've seen that. So as we're looking at that golden oil flowing from these two olive trees, we're thinking of the Spirit of God communicating to His church in order that our lives may reveal the sweetness of His love, that our service may reveal the unselfishness of His ministry. Also, we're thinking of these marvelous communications through the gift of prophecy which gave us the Old and the New Testament, and in these latter days have given us these wonderful manifestations that we call the Spirit of Prophecy. These are the latter-day revelations that magnify the Bible and help us. All of these are represented in this golden oil, this golden oil.

The purpose is that the church may give light. That's what it's all about, dear friend. The purpose of a candlestick is to do what? Give light. If a candlestick doesn't give light, what good is it? And what good is a church if it doesn't give light? It denies its mission, and it misses its destiny. This is true of the church as a whole, and it's true of every member.

“Let your light so shine before men, that they may
see your good works, and glorify your Father which
is in heaven” Matthew 5:16.

I want to ask two questions at this point: Are you receiving your power from the sanctuary? Is the love that you have the love which comes from the high and holy place where Jesus is the minister, or is it some manufactured, pepped up, human enthusiasm or pressure? Does it make a difference? It makes all the difference in the world, my friend. I trust we're not pragmatists, which simply means “if it works, use it.” We do not want any spirit except for the Holy Spirit. We do not want any results except those that are prompted by love, the result of the Holy Spirit in the heart and life. Are you with me?

I'd rather fail than win with the wine of Babylon. I would rather seem to fail again and again while I learn the lesson that love alone is worth everything to God. So Paul says that the love of Christ constrains us. And we get that golden oil from the sanctuary, from those two olive trees that stand by the Lord of the whole earth.

But I have a second question: Are we receiving our *directions* from the sanctuary? This golden oil involves more than the power of love. It involves the

illumination of the Spirit, teaching us what to do. Let's be very practical, friends. Has God given His church directions to carry on their work?

We have a medical work. We have a sanitarium. Why does the remnant church carry on sanitarium work? Because God told us to. That's the reason, that's the *whole* reason, that's *sufficient* reason.

But I press another question: If the *reason* we have a sanitarium is that God told us to, wouldn't it be a good thing to do it the *way* He told us to? Wouldn't it? Wouldn't that be reasonable? The same with our food work. Why do we have health food stores and restaurants? Because God told us through the gift of prophecy. It's part of that golden oil that flows from the sanctuary and illuminating the church.

If it is listening to the gift of prophecy that put those ideas in the hearts of the church members, is it not important that we do it the *way* He told us to do it? And in our medical work and in our food work, has God given us cautions and warnings as well as urging us onward? Has He pointed out dangers as well as bidding us go forward? He certainly has. So it is with every other phase of our work.

Why do we have Sabbath Schools? Because through the gift of prophecy, God has given us scores of pages of precious instruction, light shining from the sanctuary shining upon the remnant church. Wouldn't it be a good thing if the reason we have Sabbath Schools is that God told us to, to study the counsels He gave as to *how* to carry them on?

The same with our educational work, whether we're dealing with our children at home or in the preschools, or whether we're thinking of it in the elementary years, or the adolescent years, or in adult education. Why do we carry on a system of education from the little child right on up? Because God told us to. Through the gift of prophecy, God has guided this people and given instruction to establish these schools of various levels. If the reason we have these schools is that God told us to, through the gift of prophecy, wouldn't it be a good thing to conduct them the *way* He told us to?

What is the point of seeking the gods of Ekron either in the field of health work or in the field of education, or in any other field? When God has spoken from His high and holy place, why should we borrow the strange fire? We want that golden oil that flows from the sanctuary above. And when the church receives that, and keeps her wicks trimmed and burning, there is light throughout the church, and that light shines out. Oh, I pray that God will help us in every phase of our work.

God wants every home to be a place where the light of love shines and where the instructions of His counsels are listened to and carried out. Wouldn't it be a good thing for *every* home to be molded by the counsels of the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy concerning the relations of husband and wife, parents and children, brothers and sisters, and other members of the family? We have the counsels in *Ministry of Healing*, *Counsels to Teachers*, *Adventist Home*, *Child Guidance*, and *Messages to Young People*. And in every one of the nine volumes, we have instructions on these points.

Aren't we blessed? Are you getting your share of the golden oil? Are you in touch with that wonderful supply? And remember, we get a double blessing. We get light on what to do; we get the power to do it. The light is wisdom, and the power is love. The wisdom and the power of love are communicated to us through the gift of the Holy Spirit shed above in our hearts.

There are two warnings that God gives us:

“And He said unto them, Is a candle brought to be put under a bushel, or under a bed? And not to be set on a candlestick” Mark 4:21.

“No man, when he hath lighted a candle, covereth it with a vessel, or putteth it under a bed; but setteth it on a candlestick, that they which enter in may see the light” Luke 8:16.

The two dangers pointed out in these two texts are the dangers of hiding the light under a bushel or under a bed. A bushel is a measure used in commerce in buying and selling. It represents the commercial side of life. And Christ here is warning us against hiding our light under a bushel. Is there danger of doing that? Ah, yes, my friends. Great danger.

For example, I was speaking about the food work which God gave us to do. Notice:

“There is danger in the establishment of restaurants of losing sight of the work that most needs to be done. There is a danger of the workers losing sight of the work of soul-saving as they carry forward the business part of the enterprise” *Medical Ministry*, page 306.

That would be hiding our light under a bushel. The same with our medical work. We are again warned against the mercenary, commercial, moneymaking dangers:

“All heaven is looking on with intense interest to see what stamp medical missionary work will assume under the supervision of human beings. Will men make merchandise of God's ordained plan of reaching the dark parts of the earth with the manifestation of His benevolence? Medical missionary work is a sacred thing of God's own devising. The church is charged to convey to the world without delay God's saving mercy. We are not to cover mercy with selfishness and then call it medical missionary work...” *Ibid.*, page 131.

That would be taking the candle and putting it where? Under a bushel.

“Is the enterprise of mercy, through which in the past God has manifested His grace in rescuing and restoring, to become a matter of selfish merchandise? Shall God's agency of blessing be used by those who profess to believe the truth in buying and selling and getting gain?”
Ibid., pages 131–132.

I am sorry to say that we've come to a time when *thousands* have the idea that medical work is one place where men are excusable and even lauded sometimes if they make it a means of amassing great fortunes. Jesus, our example, didn't do it. Luke, the great beloved physician, did not do it. The apostles did not do it with the wonderful gifts of healing that God gave them. And God has told us that through His medical missionary work, the spirit of sacrifice is to be manifested. Oh, I'm thankful, dear friends, that some are getting that vision and carrying it out. They recognize that our business is to shine. And the only true light is the light of love, and love is revealed in sacrifice.

Now let's look at that other warning. What was it Jesus warned us about besides hiding the light under the bushel? Under the bed. The place of ease. Everything comfortable.

“Is it right, brethren, for you to keep your light hid under a bushel or under a bed? Is it not better that you do that which the Lord has plainly indicated you should do? Resolve now that you will give up your preference, your way, and that you will obey His voice. Seek the Lord most earnestly, with humble, fervent prayer for wisdom and for success in this endeavor. Then take the light from under the bushel, away from the place that seems most favorable for your financial interest, and from under the bed, away from the place most convenient for your comfort, and put it in a candlestick, that it may give light to all that are in the house” *Testimonies for the Church, Volume 8*, page 76.

That means the whole world, my friends. I thank God for the spirit of this work to reach out into the dark places of the earth. That's what light is for—to reach to the farthest point where it's needed. Oh, that God may help every one of us to recognize that the reason God has given us oil is not just so we can shut ourselves upon our tiny, little circle, whether it be ourselves personally or our own immediate families or our own institutions. God wants us to be constantly thinking of letting the light shine in good works, in ministry, at the *expense* of ourselves. We are not to be thinking of how to amass fortunes ourselves. We are not to be thinking principally of our own comfort.

Do you know the great reason for being comfortable? So we can do more work. The right kind of comfort, if God arranges it, enables us to accomplish more. Doesn't it, friends? Sure. There's no reason for anyone tonight to get off a comfortable bed and get down to sleep on the floor. But listen. If God calls you next week, to go out into some dark place, some mission field, or some new institution that's starting, and it means for a while at least and perhaps always, to be without the

comforts that you have here. Would you do it? Would you? If you have this spirit, you will. You will not say you want to be where everything is comfortable.

Jesus did not count Heaven a place to be desired while we were lost. He left the place where everything is comfortable, and gold used to pave the streets. He came down here as a poor man. He suffered and sacrificed and gave His life a ransom.

I thank God that there are men and women and boys and girls who are catching that spirit today. Let's rejoice in our privilege.

Now notice what happens as the church responds to the appeal of Jesus. In the early part of Isaiah 58, God speaks of people who are praying and even fasting because they want to get something. But He says, "You're selfish." What you want is for yourselves. He says, "I am not interested in that kind of prayer or that kind of fasting." Then He tells us what the fast is:

"Is not this the fast that I have chosen? To loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke? Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? When thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh" Isaiah 58:6–7.

This is practical welfare work, health work, medical missionary work. Is that right? He is talking about very practical things. He's dealing with food and housing and clothing. Now watch:

"Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily: and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the LORD shall be thy rereward" Isaiah 58:8.

This is the glorious light of love which closes the work of the Gospel in this world. It's made very clear in *Christ's Object Lessons*, the chapter, "To Meet the Bridegroom," after quoting these verses in Isaiah 58 that the remnant church will be distinguished in her closing hours by this medical ministry in loving service on a sacrificial basis.

Thank God that some of us have at least gotten our feet wet in it. I want to get into the deep river of it. What do you say?

Let's open our hearts to get all that golden oil of love that God has planned, and let it shine. Let it shine. What do you say? All right.

[Testimony service]

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