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The Candlestick Signifying Christ As The Light

Introduction

The message of the scriptures is like a beautiful piece of music constantly enfolding in itself, yet ultimately, to a glorious conclusion. The glorification of Christ in His preeminence of glory is the ultimate theme of the scriptures. The final evidence for such is in the Revelation, for if we compare the titles of the Lord in Rev. 1:1 and ch. 22:21, it is noticeable the one word difference. We first read: “The revelation of Jesus Christ” (Rev. 1:1) and then in the final verse it reads: “The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ” (Rev. 22:21). That one word “Lord” summarizes the teaching of the scriptures: “Jesus Christ is Lord”, evidently His preeminence and unreserved authority is being emphasized. The Tabernacle is one of the many subjects in the scriptures that presents this truth, the readings for which are found in Exodus 25:31-32; 37:17-21.



The first observation is that the word “candlestick” refers to two things. Reading carefully we see that on one level “candlestick” refers to the central shaft, and it only (Ex. 25:32; 37:17, 21; Num. 8:2). Other scriptures use “candlestick” to mean the entire piece of furniture (Ex. 25:31). If there would be no branches that central shaft would still be the candlestick and the branches are only “candlestick” because of their union with the central shaft.

There are a series of truths emphasizing its uniqueness. There was nothing like it for centrality (Ex. 37:21), imperativeness and singularity (Ex. 37:17), descriptiveness and superlativeness (Ex. 37:19). Because it indicates the preeminence of the Lord, with preeminence goes authority. Allow an illustration. Many years ago Queen Victoria had a husband called Albert. He was not a king but a consort. There was a day when they had an argument and Albert locked himself in one of the rooms. Victoria knocked on the door and said: “Albert, open the door”. He refused! She then said: “Albert, this is your wife, please open the door.” He refused! Then she said: “Albert, open the door for the Queen of England”. Albert had no option because the one in preeminence and authority had spoken to him.

Our meditation will be on it’s preeminence through it singularity, and therefore, authority of Christ.

It’s Singularity

The central shaft is called “his branch” (Ex. 37:17) but the others are, except when being described, always in the plural (Ex. 25:31, 32, 33). This observation presents the delightful truth that in whatever realm we consider the Lord, He is without peer and stands alone. In statesmen He is the Governor (Psa. 22:28); in the religious realm He is the Lord (Rev. 17:14); and in the regal realm He is the King of kings (1 Tim. 6:15).

In Hebrews (Heb. 1:1) Christ is the prophet in contrast to the others as prophets. He stands unique amongst them. They were men but He is the Son; they were multiple, He was singular; they were the incomplete unveilings of the mind and purposes of God, He was the full manifestation of God and the Father; they were sinful men, He was spotless. He is the priest with a superior priesthood to Aaron, ministering in a superior tabernacle, having a superior sacrifice and a superior place.

When describing the candlestick God could have called the branches “twigs” (Ezek. 17:4), but He called them “branches”, the same truth as the Lord taught when He said: “I am the vine, ye are the branches” (Jn. 15:5). It indicated an organic connection, a living organism to produce fruit (Jn. 15:5).

We further observe that the singularity of Christ is set in contrast to the multiplies of we who are organically united to Him.

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- a) Christ is a priest, we are priests:
 - i) "Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession." (Heb. 4:14)
 - ii) "Called of God and high priest after the order of Melchisedec." (Heb. 5:10)
 - iii) "Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus." (Heb. 3:1)

- b) Christ is a Priest, but we are a kingdom of priests or a priesthood.
 - i) "And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen." (Rev. 1:6)

- c) Christ is King but we are kings.
 - i) "And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS." (Rev. 19:16)
 - ii) "And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen." (Rev. 1:6)

- d) Christ is the Son but we are sons.
 - i) "Then they that were in the ship came and worshiped him, saying, Of a truth, thou art the Son of God." (Matt. 14:33)
 - ii) "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name." (Jn. 1:12)
 - iii) "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." (Rom. 8:14)
 - iv) "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not." (1 Jn. 3:1)

- e) Christ is the Light but we are lights.
 - i) "Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." (Jn. 8:12)
 - ii) "That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world." (Phil. 2:15)

- f) Christ is the Living stone and we are living stones.
 - i) "To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious." (1 Pet. 2:4)
 - ii) "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house." (1 Pet. 2:5)

- g) Christ is the Fellow but we are fellows.
 - i) "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts." (Zech. 13:7)
 - ii) "Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows." (Heb. 1:9)

- h) Christ is the Chief shepherd but men are shepherds.
 - i) "Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus that great Shepherd (poimen) of the sheep." (Heb. 13:20)
 - ii) "And He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers (poimen)." (Eph. 4:11)

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Because of His singularity, as the Light His adjudications and authority stand supreme.

This man who as the Light is exclusively brightness of glory, (Heb. 1:3), He alone is the Eliminator of all confusion and darkness. He will expose every distortion of spiritual error with a view to us changing our behaviors , etc., to be in conformity to His character.

Christ As The Light Exposes Distortion

He Exposes	Reference
The error or man's thinking that physical relationships means spiritual freedom.	"Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free . . . Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin. . . If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed. I know that ye are Abraham's seed; but ye seek to kill me, because my word hath no place in you." (Jn. 8:31-37)
Man's motives and His hypocritical spirituality.	"Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven. Therefore when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth: . . . And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward." (Matt. 6:1-5)
The inconsistency of profession of living for eternity when living for time.	Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." (Matt. 6:19-21)
Man's false ideas of separation, confusing it with isolation.	Israel was to be a light to the nations (Isa. 49:3, 6), but they were religious separatists. They found fault when the Lord ate with publicans and sinners: "As Jesus sat at meat in the house, behold, many publicans and sinners came and sat down with him and his disciples. And when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto his disciples, Why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners? (Matt. 9:10-11). "The Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them" (Lk. 15:1-2). There were separations in the house.

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He Exposes	Reference
The error of those who used the graciousness of God for their own material advantage.	“And the Jews' passover was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem, And found in the temple those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting: And when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen; and poured out the changers' money, and overthrew the tables.” (Jn. 2:13-15)
The error of what true life consists of.	“And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consistent not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.” (Lk. 12:15)
The true meaning of the Sabbath.	“The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath” (Mk. 2:27). One Sabbath He healed and it is recorded: “The ruler of the synagogue answered with indignation, because that Jesus had healed on the Sabbath day, and said unto the people, There are six days in which men ought to work: in them therefore come and be healed, and not on the Sabbath day. The Lord then answered him, and said, Thou hypocrite, doth not each one of you on the sabbath loose his ox or his ass from the stall, and lead him away to watering? And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath day?” (Lk. 13:14-16)
The error of those who thought they could claim the inheritance of the promises of God apart from the lifestyle which accompany's the promises.	“They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham. But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham.” (Jn. 8:39-40)
The attitude of God toward those who refused to see the truth.	“And when he had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts, he saith unto the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched it out: and his hand was restored whole as the other.” (Mk. 3:5)

As we listen to the injunctions of the Light, let us not be arrogant and ignore His exposures. It must give the Father great joy as he sees His children listen to the Light. When we, as individuals, assemblies, and churches listen, and with willing hearts respond and become more conformed to His likeness, then we will learn what walking in the Light really means.

..... Rowan Jennings