

The Lampstand of the Lord



1 What Does the Church Look like in the Last Days?

1.1 The Resurrected Lord Jesus Christ and His Church

Rev 1 ⁹I, John, both your brother and companion in the tribulation and kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was on the island that is called Patmos for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ. ¹⁰I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day, and I heard behind me a loud voice, as of a trumpet, ¹¹saying, "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last," and, "What you see, write in a book and send it to the seven churches which are in Asia: to Ephesus, to Smyrna, to Pergamos, to Thyatira, to Sardis, to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea."

¹²Then I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands, ¹³and in the midst of the seven lampstands *One* like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band. ¹⁴His head and hair *were* white like wool, as white as snow, and His eyes like a flame of fire; ¹⁵His feet *were* like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace, and His voice as the sound of many waters; ¹⁶He had in His right hand seven stars, out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and His countenance *was* like the sun shining in its strength. ¹⁷And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. But He laid His right hand on me, saying to me, "Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last. ¹⁸*I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of Death.* ¹⁹Write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after this. ²⁰The mystery of the seven stars which you saw in My right hand, and the seven golden lampstands: The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands which you saw are the seven churches.

1.2 Lamps that Burn Brightly in the Last Days

25 "Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. ²Now five of them were wise, and five *were* foolish. ³Those who *were* foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them, ⁴but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. ⁵But while the bridegroom was delayed, they all slumbered and slept.

⁶"And at midnight a cry was *heard*: 'Behold, the bridegroom is coming; go out to meet him!' ⁷Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps. ⁸And the foolish said to the wise, 'Give us *some* of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' ⁹But the wise answered, saying, 'No, lest there should not be enough for us and you; but go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.' ¹⁰And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut.

¹¹"Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open to us!' ¹²But he answered and said, 'Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you.'

¹³"Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming.

2 The Lampstand of the Lord – The Endtime Revelation of the Church

2.1 The Revelation of the Resurrected Lord in the Church

Jesus walks among the 7 lampstands, and He holds 7 stars (angels) in His hands.

All 7 candle sticks are burning, revealing the Living God in the Resurrected, Ascended, Glorified Christ.

Christ walks among the 7 lampstands, among His Churches however dismal we appear. He is not somewhere else, walking among the CEO's or politicians or movie stars.

Jesus the slain Lamb has 7 eyes, all-seeing eyes that are the flames of fire. They are the seven spirits sent out into the whole earth. The 7 lamps burning before God's Throne are the Seven Spirits of God.

Jesus sets His Church on the earth, and the Spirit of God ignites the lampstand with divine fire from heaven.

These eyes of the Lord run to and fro, searching for men and women whose hearts pull Him by faith, and He lands on the person and ignites heaven's fire in him.

Rev 4 ² *Immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, a throne set in heaven, and One sat on the throne. ³ And He who sat there was like a jasper and a sardius stone in appearance; and there was a rainbow around the throne, in appearance like an emerald. ⁴ Around the throne were twenty-four thrones, and on the thrones I saw twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white robes; and they had crowns of gold on their heads. ⁵ And from the throne proceeded lightnings, thunderings, and voices. Seven lamps of fire were burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God.*

The Church belongs completely and exclusively to the Lord Jesus Christ – His body, His temple, His family, His masterpiece, His army, and His Bride.

This makes God's Church HOLY. You and I are HOLY. CHURCH, Saints – called out, separated out to enter into union with the HOLY one.

The holiness of God must be experienced by encountering Him.

Is 11 *There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse, And a Branch shall grow out of his roots. ² The Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon Him, The Spirit of wisdom and understanding, The Spirit of counsel and might, The Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD. ³ His delight is in the fear of the LORD,*

We are not talking about man's knowledge and might here, but God's knowledge and might that stop the sun and the moon at the voice of Joshua, His servant, who cries out to Him.

Earth's surface rotational speed at the equator is 1656 Km per hour. If the earth's spin suddenly stopped and God's hand did not hold it together, the earth's surface will be ripped to shreds, and engulfed by an apocalyptic tsunami and earthquakes.

We are told the sky will roll back like a curtain at Jesus' coming – the space-time fabric will rip open one day. Heaven and earth will flee from the face of the One who sits on the White Throne Judgment seat.

The final revelation of God in the Church and to the world will be the fear of the Lord. We will understand the holiness of God.

Angelic Activity will explode in the last days.

The harvest is the end of the age, and angels are the reapers – of both the grain harvest of souls and the grape harvest of judgment.

Jesus sent His angel - His personal angel - to John on the island of Patmos with the revelation of Himself.

Jesus has His angel over every church that belongs to Him, and a battalion of angels under the head angel.

An angel with a big sword appeared to a prophetic minister Larry Randolph years ago, saying 'I've been sent from the presence of the Almighty to cut off the heads of those whose hearts have been lifted up in pride.'

In a time of Transition - time of change - time of war – a deeper humility is required.

3 Our Personal Lamps

3.1 Preparing Our Lamps for the Lord

John the Baptist was a burning and shining lamp that God sent to Israel and the world to show the WAY to God, to put the light on Jesus Christ at His first coming.

He burned brightly – a short life – as a voice preparing the way of the Lord, REPENT, the Kingdom is near, The King is coming.

A runway for an airplane is paved in the wilderness – crooked paths made straight, rough roads made smooth, valleys filled up, mountains leveled, and stones were taken out.

No revival ever started in the centre of religious power, but in the 'wilderness fringe' with a group of people unknown to men, on their faces seeking God with all their hearts.

Before the second coming of the Lord, God will have His Church burning brightly, shining our light on Jesus, and preparing the way of the Lord. We will carry and embody the revelation of Christ's death, resurrection, power, beauty, and glory.

When the late Princess Diana visited Sydney years ago, the entire city went into a frenzy – cleaning the streets and doing up the roads through which she was to be driven, people going out with flags and welcoming her.

When President Ford of the USA visited South Korea years ago when Korea was poor, the entire nation went into a frenzy to welcome this VVVIP.

The best hotel in Korea tore up their rooftop and built a swimming pool because Present Ford liked to swim for his daily exercise.

It was -20C winter in Korea, and there was no green grass lawn anywhere in the country. They hired a specialist group who flew to a warmer country and dug up their fresh lawn, so they could spread it out for President Ford to walk on.

If a President of a nation comes to our home, I am sure we will clean, wash, renovate and be at our best.

We do this just for the few days of a President's visit –someone whose power will last on a few years!

Jesus is coming back for His Church as Her Bridegroom King and as the Judge to the nations of the earth.

Church the Bride has to make herself ready to receive the King – in a clean white linen wedding robe.

Rev 19⁷ Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.”⁸ And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.

Let's clean up our lives, and our priorities, and repent as the Holy Spirit convicts us and grants us repentance.

What is your pet sin that puts a stain on your holy garment God has granted you? Complaining? Impatience? Rash words? Condemning people?

Do you have addictions you need to be free of? Do you suffer mental oppressions that torment you?

The Lord never condemns anyone who comes to Him for help with their shame, guilt, and helplessness. His heart turns over with compassion, and He releases His power to rescue you out of the pit.

3.2 The Bridegroom's Delay

We are living in the time of delay. God's delay fulfils two goals.

To extend the period of grace, giving chance to more people to repent and turn to God through Jesus Christ.

When an assignment is due on a certain day, some students will beg for grace, citing all kinds of excuses or reasons why they weren't able to finish the work on time.

Teachers want to pass their students, and will often grant an extension of grace period.

God's delay is an opportunity granted for us to make things right.

To separate out the TRUE from the FALSE – all 10 virgins had their lamps burning. If the bridegroom came on time, nothing would have set apart the wise virgins from the foolish virgins.

All ten would have looked the same, and all ten would have gone into the wedding party.

But it is absolutely clear from the Scripture that God separates out the true from the false – ALWAYS. Sheep and Goat, Wheat and Tare, Good fish from the Bad fish, Wise virgins and Foolish virgins.

God will not have fakes, pretenders, or imposters in His Kingdom to come.

The test of time reveals the true quality on the inside. Gold-plated jewelry shows its true nature over time because the paint, the veneer comes off, and reveals what it is made of inside.

Wise virgins who took the vessel of oil with their lamps are lovers of Christ, who go beyond the call of duty. They make sure their lamps will burn for the Lord they love beyond just the couple of hours in the waiting room. They spent their money to buy extra oil for their lamp.

Foolish virgins are who took their lamps with no vessel of extra oil – they are those who do the minimum to get by, to make a suitable appearance, but did not spend their money on things other than to buy oil for the lamp.

The Lord's delay – the time of waiting – will reveal whose lamps will keep on burning beyond a couple of hours, and whose lamps will flicker and go out.

Jesus' warning here – if we have been foolish, then we can change our course. We can get up, run and buy the oil and run back. It is still the time of preparation. The time of delay is also the time of extended grace.

2 Cor 6 ² *For He says: "In an acceptable time I have heard you, And in the day of salvation I have helped you." Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.*

There will come a day when time will be no more and there is NO more delay.

3.3 Preparing the Oil

God commanded His people to bring pure oil from pressed olives to keep the lampstand burning in the Holy Place.

The highest quality olive oil is produced by handpicked, fresh, and ripe olives, taken immediately to be crushed into a paste, then pressed to extract the oil.

Olives picked up from the ground, or olives picked from the tree but left for too long, or olives picked by machines - are not fresh or they are damaged – do not produce quality oil.

Is 55 *"Ho! Everyone who thirsts, Come to the waters; And you who have no money, Come, buy and eat. Yes, come, buy wine and milk Without money and without price.*

² *Why do you spend money for what is not bread, And your wages for what does not satisfy? Listen carefully to Me, and eat what is good, And let your soul delight itself in abundance.*

³ *Incline your ear, and come to Me. Hear, and your soul shall live;*

And I will make an everlasting covenant with you—The sure mercies of David.

Come, buy without money – but it will cost you something far more precious - your heart, your love, your time.

You Terrible Miserable Wise virgins - why are you so selfish, why you don't share??!!

There are things you cannot share. I cannot prepare for your exam. You cannot prepare for my exam.

In the olden days, people cheated by having someone else sit for their exams. Now with a computerised ID checking system, it is very difficult to cheat.

With the ID system of heaven, no one can cheat – period. That day of fire will reveal everything for what it really is on the inside.

3.4 The Ultimate Test

Jesus' deciding verdict on the foolish virgins – 'I do not know you.'

Jesus is not talking about his omnipotent knowledge. He numbers the hair on our heads. He is talking about personal knowing.

2 Tim 2:19 – *'Nevertheless the solid foundation of God stands, having this seal: "The Lord knows those who are His.'*

What would the Lord say to the wise virgins? 'I know you, you are Mine.'

Mark 7:6 - Jesus said to the Pharisees and scribes, "Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written: 'This people honours Me with their lips, But their heart is far from Me.'

Is Your lamp flickering?

Isaac Bennett of IHOPKC said:

Often we build an idol when the Lord wants an altar.

An idol is something that parades around as God, an altar is where we meet with God and worship Him.

An altar is not a place where you first get, but the place where you first give.

3.5 Food for Thought

1. What helps you to stay close to the Lord?
2. What one specific thing did you find that damages your walk with the Lord? How do you repent of it and concretely turn away from it?
3. How do you deal with self-righteousness and pride? How do you recognise it? How do you guard your heart against it?
4. What does it mean to fear the Lord? How do we learn the true fear of the Lord and increase in it?
5. Are you working on any unhealthy fears, anxieties, doubts, and pains that hinder your relationship with the Lord? Have you found ways of overcoming them?
6. Is the Lord teaching you that you have great authority as a child of God? Have you found that the knowledge is freeing you to serve the Lord with greater joy and boldness?