

June 11, 2023

Exodus 37:17-24 NIV

17 They made the lampstand of pure gold and hammered it out, base and shaft; its flowerlike cups, buds and blossoms were of one piece with it. *18* Six branches extended from the sides of the lampstand-three on one side and three on the other. *19* Three cups shaped like almond flowers with buds and blossoms were on one branch, three on the next branch and the same for all six branches extending from the lampstand. *20* And on the lampstand were four cups shaped like almond flowers with buds and blossoms. *21* One bud was under the first pair of branches extending from the lampstand, a second bud under the second pair, and a third bud under the third pair-six branches in all. *22* The buds and the branches were all of one piece with the lampstand, hammered out of pure gold. *23* They made its seven lamps, as well as its wick trimmers and trays, of pure gold. *24* They made the lampstand and all its accessories from one talent of pure gold.



Light and Life

Exodus 37:17-24

BIG IDEA: Jesus Christ is the Light of the World, the one through whom we have life and salvation, and the one whose light we must shine for others to see

OUTLINE

1. The Lampstand

- Appearance
- Practical Function
- Symbolism
 - a. Life
 - b. Light

2. Application

- Believe the Light
- Witness to the Light(Word, Character, Deed)
- Shine the Light
 - a. Church
 - b. Home
 - c. Community

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

God's Lamp. The golden lampstand was made of seventy-five pounds of pure gold, hammered out of one solid piece! Two and half cinder blocks weigh about seventy-five pounds (Reddit). Resting on a base, the central stem had six branches, three on either side, together carrying seven lamps. The lampstand with its branches was modeled on a flowering almond tree. Each branch of the lamp was carved with shapes representing the three stages of life in an almond tree: bud, blossom, fruit. One of the priest's tasks was to keep the lamp burning so that it was never extinguished. Without light, nothing grows, and everything dies. God designed this tree-like lamp to show that by being the light-giver, he was also the life-giver. (See also Exodus 25:31-40).

- ESV Study Bible & David Murray, Exodus: Stories of Redemption & Relationship p. 133.



Praise to Jesus. Read Revelation 22:1-5. Praise God because He is a God of actions and words. He told the people that He would dwell with them. He confirmed this by His presence in a cloud and pillar of fire, which He also used to lead. He confirmed His presence in the always, shining the light of the lampstand. Praise God for light which is the source of physical and spiritual life. Praise God for sending the Light of the World, Jesus Christ to give light to the dark world, by giving life and light to your heart which shines forever bright because He will never leave you or forsake you.

Repentance through Jesus. Take some time today to pause to pray. Ask the Holy Spirit to show you any darkness or unbelief in your heart. Confess your sins to the Lord and ask Jesus to forgive you. Confess the ways that you have let the darkness of the world cause you to forget that Jesus is the light of the world; He is far more powerful than any darkness or sin.

Consecration for Jesus. Pastor David Murray says, "God's living lamp gives light and life to your soul so that you can be light and life to others." Today, determine to let the Lord's light and life shine in you so that you can live in the light and be light and life to others.

DISCIPLESHIP DURING THE WEEK

These “Sermon Discussion Questions” are designed for study during the week for believers in a wide variety of ages & stages in their walk with Christ.

1. Do you know anyone who enjoys the dark? What do you associate with darkness? How do you think about light? What associations do you have with light?
2. One of the jobs that God gave to the priest was to keep the lamp always lit. What does the ever-burning light from the lampstand say to the Israelites about God and how He wanted the Israelites to understand Him?
3. What did God create first (Genesis 1:3-4)? List things that must have light to exist and thrive. When God established His covenant with the Israelites, He gave them the Tabernacle. In the Tabernacle, He gave them light. What did the light mean to the Israelites? What does it mean to you? Read 1 John 1:5-7. What does it mean to walk in the light? How can your heart become dark? When darkness creeps back into your heart what do you do? (1 John 1:9)
4. Read Genesis 3:24. What did life outside the garden look like? see also Genesis 2:15). The lampstand with its branches was modeled after a flowering almond tree. Each branch of the lamp was carved with shapes representing the three stages of life in an almond tree: bud, blossom, fruit. In the lampstand God symbolically restored what was lost at the Fall. How do the symbols of the bud, blossom, and fruit show what God was restoring for the Israelites? How are light and life connected?
5. Read Ephesians 5:8-10. Paul reminds the Ephesians that before Christ, they “were darkness”. Why were the Ephesians darkness before Christ came into their lives? In John 8:12 Jesus said, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness but will have the light of life.” Jesus is light and life. He doesn’t just light up the Holy Place, he lit the entire world. How does light come to a world of darkness? Whose life will you shine God’s light into today?

FOR FAMILIES AND YOUNG CHILDREN

1. Exodus 37 describes the making of the Ark of the Covenant, the Table, the Lampstand, and the Altar of Incense. What material did God direct them to use to make these furnishings? *(They were to be made of gold. Look at verses 2-3, 6-7, 11-12, 15-17, 22-24, 26-28.)*

a. These furnishings were to be located in the Holy Place and Most Holy Place. The furnishings outside of these places were made of bronze. Why do think there is the difference? *(The Holy Place and Most Holy Place were closer to God's presence and therefore the gold was a sign of God's holiness and excellence.)*

2. Pastor Jonathan focused on the Lampstand from Exodus 37:17-24. Go back and read Exodus 25:31-40 and 27:20-21 to get more details about its design and use.

a. What would be a practical use for the Lampstand? *(It would provide light for the work of the priests.)*

b. What was the symbolism of the Lampstand? *(It was to remind them of God's presence that led them out of Egypt. It also reminded them of the light of God shining in a dark world broken by sin.)*

c. In Exodus 25:33-34 what from nature served as a model for the Lampstand? *(It was modeled after a flowering almond tree.)*

Scriptures for further study:

John 1:14-18

2 Corinthians 8:9

2 Corinthians 9:6-15

Philippians 4:19

FOR STUDENTS

1. Try to describe the design of the Tabernacle, its parts, and furniture.
2. What was the good news communicated through the Tabernacle when it was given to Israel in the days of Moses? Think in terms of kingdom, Temple, and rest.
3. What, in particular, was the message proclaimed by the Ark of the Covenant, table of showbread, lampstand, and alter of incense?
4. How do these features of the Tabernacle help us to better appreciate who Jesus Christ was and what he did for us on the cross to earn our redemption?

FOR NON-BELIEVERS OR NEW BELIEVERS

1. The lampstand was the only source of light in the Tabernacle, otherwise things inside the tent would have been very dark. The lampstand is a symbol of Jesus Christ, who declares himself to be the very Light of the World, who alone can shine into the darkness of our lives and hearts.

Question: Would you now confess the darkness (lostness) of your heart, and the light and the life that only Jesus Christ can bring? (1 Peter 2:9)

2. If you are already a believer, and Christ's light is now shining in you, what are some ways in which you might be a positive witness of that light for others to see? How can your words be a witness to that light? How does/can your character provide a witness? How do your deeds demonstrate that light for others?

3. Identify some of the spheres in which you operate. For example, your workplace, your home, your places of leisure, your community, etc.

Question: What are some specific ways you can shine your light in each of these spheres of influence?



The Seventh Plague of Egypt, John Martin, 1823

About the artist and painting: The English Romantic painter John Martin was no stranger to death and despair. Out of the 13 children born to his mother and father, John was one of only 6 that survived childhood. He grew up in poverty, the son of a farm laborer. In 1813, John lost his grandmother, mother, father, and youngest son all in the same year. Despite his popular appeal to English society, he was never really celebrated much less even accepted by the art community. Yet he was somewhat of a revolutionary by choosing to paint very fantastic, biblical scenes and landscapes. One can't help but think John looked to the extraordinary aspects of the bible to deal with the harsh realities of life in a broken world.

His 1823 work, *The Seventh Plague of Egypt*, helps to capture the deliverance theme so prevalent in the Book of Exodus. In the painting you have these mighty structures of Pharaoh's palace, city, and pyramids all displayed in their grandeur. In Moses' day this represented to God's people Pharaoh's power and oppression towards them as he ruthlessly made their lives harsh. Yet God is breaking into these circumstances, "showing up" to bring about His deliverance. In this painting, over and above the Egyptian structures is something more magnificent, the storm of God: thunder, hail, and fire being poured down upon the oppressor and persecutor of His people. And your eye is drawn to the man standing on the left side of the painting, Moses, with outstretched arms looking to the LORD and His deliverance.

The purpose of Exodus:

“The original purpose of Exodus was theological, to teach God’s people about himself and their relationship to him.” - Peter Enns, NIVAC, 25.

“Exodus is about a man, Moses. He is central to the narrative in a way in which no single character, not even Abraham, dominates Genesis...Exodus is about a nation, Israel, moving from slavery in Egypt into freedom...but ultimately Exodus is about God, about the God of the covenant who has instituted a new relationship between himself and those whom he has called to be his people.”
- John Mackay, Exodus, 9.

“The whole story of Exodus is a covenant narrative. The God who pledged himself to Abraham and his descendants remained the faithful God. He had made promises and intended to honor them, and when his moment came, honor them he did...in a word, Exodus cannot be described simply as the book of the holiness of the Lord, nor simply as the book of the presence of the Lord, but as the book of the holy God present in all his holiness at the heart of his people’s life, their provident savior and friend, who makes provision whereby they, in all their unworthiness, may live safely with him.” - Alec Motyer, The Bible Speaks Today: The Message of Exodus, 20, 23.

The setting for Exodus 1:1-2:25 is Israel in Egypt. The opening section sets the stage for the rest of the book by describing: the connection to the narrative of Genesis (Ex. 1:1–7), the oppression that has arisen under a new pharaoh (1:8–22), the preservation of Moses at birth (2:1–10) and later in Midian (2:11–22), and the declaration of God’s intimate knowledge of Israel’s suffering and God’s faithfulness to his covenant with Abraham and his descendants (2:23–25).

Exodus is a journey in two parts.

Part One: Egypt Exodus 1-15 Aug. 7th – Oct. 30th

Part Two: Sinai Exodus 16-18 Nov. 6th – Nov. 20th

Pause for Advent: Nov. 27th – Dec. 18th

Part Two Cont. Sinai Exodus 19 - 39 Jan. 8th – June 25th

Pause for Capital Campaign Series: Jan. 22nd-Feb. 12th

Pause for DNOW: February 19th

Pause for Missions Sunday: March 26th

Resources for further study:

Exodus: A Mentors Commentary by John Mackay

Exodus: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition of Holy Scripture
(Volume 2) (The New American Commentary) by Douglas Stuart