

The Golden Lampstand

by Henry Law

The golden lampstand is an image of Christ, representing His purity, beauty, and light, which brings us salvation, wisdom, and understanding.

Scripture: Exodus 25:31, Isaiah 53:5, John 8:12, Ephesians 5:14, Ephesians 5:27, Colossians 1:27, 1 Peter 2:22, Revelation 21:23

Topics: "Christology", "Redemption"

Description

Henry Law preaches on the significance of the pure, hammered gold lampstand in the holy Tent as a representation of Christ, the all-gold Savior without blemish, who bore the agonizing work of redemption to free souls from sin's dues. The beaten gold symbolizes the wounds and scars Christ endured to provide salvation for all, leading to the full-blown loveliness of Christ as the epitome of beauty and grace. Christ is depicted as the spreading tree, the perfect and unfailing light, and the revealer of God's attributes, bringing clarity to the purpose and end of being.

Transcript

"Make a lampstand of pure, hammered gold. The entire lampstand and its decorations will be one piece--the base, center stem, lamp cups, buds, and blossoms." Exodus 25:31

Reader! in holy thought enter the holy Tent. You pass a curtain rich in richest hues. Then what a scene appears! Light in its loveliest softness gleams around. The pure-gold sides, the pure-gold vessels, the sparkling canopy cast back resplendent rays. From where flows this glow of day? The orbs of heaven lent not their aid. No sun-gleam plays, no moon-beam sleeps upon the radiant walls. A Lampstand alone lifts high a seven-crowned head--and night is no more known. Faith looks, and soon discerns the truth of the bright vessel. Glad memory recalls the word, 'The city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it, for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.' It sees that this must be an image of that heavenly home in which Christ is the full light. The light, then, here exhibits Him. Christ is the seven-lighted Lampstand. It is so. All is darkness without Him.

Let us now pause, and trace with humble prayer the beauties of this Gospel-portrait. Holy Spirit, we desire to see Jesus. Will not You reveal Him? No heart of man can learn, except Your teaching voice go forth.

First, what shall be brought to make up a Lampstand which shall prefigure Christ? Our costliest wealth seems mean for such high use. Value is valueless beside Him. But earth can only give her purest

substance. It is pure gold. This is the metal, then, which God, the great craftsman, selects.

Reader! this choice proclaims that Christ is an all-gold Savior! Yes! There is no dross, no flaw, no blemish in Him. Mark well His blood. Oh! wondrous truth. It is divine. Divinely it weighs down all mountains of vile sin. Divinely it pays all claims of infinite demands. Divinely it sets free the debt-bound of a countless family. Divinely it satisfies, until satisfaction overflows. Gaze on His righteousness. It also is divine. God's eye can never rejoice in it enough. God's throne can scarcely give it worth. This decks the Church in her spotless robe. 'The King's daughter is all glorious within--her clothing is of wrought gold.'

Give ear to His unfailling prayer. Its incense is perpetual fragrance. Its power moves the heart of God. It cannot ask in vain. Thus golden blessings bless the ransomed race.

Next, the pure gold is BEATEN. Fast-falling blows hammer it to shape. This image leads us to the stricken Jesus. Redemption is an agonizing work. It cost but little to form countless worlds. It costs but little to sustain them. God willed, and they shone forth. He wills, and they still shine. But torments without limit must be borne to free one soul from sin's dues. My soul, often ponder this amazing truth. Your sins are many as all ocean's sands. Each is most justly doomed to all the fury of most righteous wrath. God hates your evil, and is pledged to punish all of it. Truth dies if sin escapes. In person or by proxy you must take its curse. But Jesus is this proxy. He 'suffers, the just for the unjust.' He pleads--"I come to represent a sentenced culprit. Spare him, and pour all punishment on Me." God in His grace consents. Wound follows wound, until in the deepened grave of scars, all guilt is buried from His sight.

But O my soul, your case is only one. Salvation's roll has names which baffle number. For each, for all, Christ bears all woe. He flinches not, until the last sin of His last child is fully washed out by His bleeding stripes. Thus Christ is bruised. Thus the pure gold is beaten. The anvil and the hammer of inflicted blows work out a perfect Savior. The gold is beaten into beauteous form. A luxury of ornaments decks every part. The branches shine as clustered trees of fruit and flowers.

Reader! we thus are led to mark the full-blown loveliness of Christ. Say, what is beauty? Is it not the union of symmetric charms? Is it not a matchless harmony, in which each part adds grace to each? Is it not a power which rivets gaze, and chains each sense in fetters of delight, and makes the mind a flood of ecstasy? Then what is beauty but Christ Jesus?

Survey His PERSON. It is our manhood decked in glorious Deity. It is a luster which outshines the sun. It is a loveliness besides which the heavens look black. It is the statue for which eternal counsels cannot raise a pedestal too high.

Survey His WORK. It is exact proportion. All claims of God, all need of man have their just place. It is a city based in eternal love, and crowned with eternal glory. Each stone is a saved soul. Each is the mirror of Jehovah's greatness.

They who, through grace, thus see their Lord, never withdraw their love. Their hearts are fixed. The beauties of Christ eclipse all other charms. This is the delight of Scripture. Christ beautifully shines in every page. This is the sweet relish in each Gospel-ordinance. Christ is enjoyed, the savor of the whole. Hence springs the longing to depart. To die is to meet Christ face to face.

The central stem of the Lampstand sends forth six branches from its sides. It thus presents the image of a spreading tree. And such is Christ. At Calvary a little seed is cast into the soil. But soon the vigorous

sprouts appear. The boughs go forth into all lands and distant nations find luxuriant shade. What though this earth is most uncongenial to the plant! Still it thrives and blossoms and bears fruit--and grateful foliage screens reposing crowds.

Reader! is your calm seat beneath this shelter? Is your soul-feast from these soul-feeding tendrils? If it is not so, what is your hope? where your excuse? You cannot say that Christ's arms spread not above your dwelling. Open your eye and behold Him. Stretch out your hand and touch Him. If you refuse, you perish. And it is sad death to die beneath the tree of life.

The seven branches support seven lamps. Each summit is a coronet of fire. Little would be the profit of the costly frame, unless light sparkled from it. But it burns brightly. This is its especial purpose. The mystic number and the constant blaze show Christ a perfect and unfailing light. Study this light, this first-born of creation's gifts. It is the life, the joy, the grace of nature's world. And is not Christ the life, the joy, the grace of the poor sinner's soul? Without this Lampstand, where is the Tabernacle's splendor? Its brilliant colors are all colorless. Its golden walls are a dark blank. All form, all shape, all rays are the black sameness of a vault. The eye looks round on undistinguishable night.

Without the sun, where are creation's charms? The trees hang down their withered heads; the meadows are a noxious swamp; the melody of groves is hushed; the skies above frown as a pall of adamant; the earth's flowery carpet is an icy rock; death shivers on a frozen throne. Such is man's heart, without the light of Christ. It is a poisoned marsh, a barren desert, a joyless waste, a rayless night, a deathful tomb! It must be so, because God is unknown. The great Jehovah is love and grace and mercy and tender pity and power and wisdom and truth and holiness and justice. But where is this discerned? What is the grand school of such high thought? Nature cannot teach this. It is not written in the page of providence. The law shows nothing but angry frowns. Reason's poor candle only cheats. Unaided wisdom, with its strongest wing, can only flutter in the valley of vanity. No earth-born eye can catch a glimpse of God.

But let the Sun of Righteousness arise; let Christ send forth His heaven-bright rays. Then the scene changes. Then what floods of glory roll the mists away! The face of Jesus shows the truth of God. Each attribute is seen in Him as the clear blue of heaven. All then appear entwined in harmony's embrace, taking delight in bringing in salvation, and glorifying God in glorifying man. Behold the cross! A halo round about it writes in golden letters--God hates sin, and loves the sinner. He is just, and justifies the ungodly. He is righteous, and passes by unrighteousness. He is holy, and makes fit the unholy for His kingdom. He is free grace, and populates heaven from lost souls. He is glory, and builds His glorious palace from the mire of earth's quarry. Christ, Christ alone, shows this. Christ, then, is Light.

Without Christ, also, the affairs of this world are but a puzzled maze. Poor blinded man sees nothing as it really is. He does not know the true end of being. He imagines the tinsel to be gold. He counts the true gold as dross. He treasures up the chaff as wheat. All his view is bounded by time's narrow line! All his heart is fixed on vanity's vain trifles! He chases bubbles on perdition's brink! He profits no one and he ruins himself!

The case is different when Christ shines on his heart and mind. The opened eye then clearly sees the purpose and the end of being. The Bible-lamp then shows that man's true object is to win salvation. Wisdom then cries--Seek pardon for transgression, pleas for remission, acquittal at the judgment bar, and hope beyond the grave. The Gospel-torch reveals the mighty fact that time is granted to gain grace. Christ brings man to this clear-day life. Christ, then, is Light.

Reader! is He the Lampstand within your soul? Then see that its pure blaze ascends. It was the priest's part to trim and dress it every morning. It had golden implements to remove the dross and to revive the flame. And golden implements are ready for your hand. You know them well. Oh! use them rightly, and with pious zeal. Prayer, meditation, Scripture-ordinances, holy communion, holy labors, are golden tools for this most sacred work.

God ordained means to tend these lamps. He provides helps to fan the flame within you. It may be that you sometimes sit in the dark chamber of distress and doubt and fear. Your light is dim. But why? The fault is not with Christ. He is still near, and ready to shine forth. Arise! Apply the oil which the Spirit brings. In prayer before the Gospel-page, stir up the fading embers. Brightness will soon re-appear, and cheering rays make gladness more glad.

Is there a reader whose heart is not the tabernacle of these lamps? Ah! Sir, your case indeed is sad. Your eyes have never seen that lovely sight which is the joy of heaven and earth. Gross darkness covers you, but thicker night awaits you. But listen! A wondrous word calls after you. Oh! that it might rise as Bethlehem's star, to guide you to the Savior! Oh! that it might be the first ray of salvation's orb! Listen! it cries, 'Awake, you who sleep, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give you light.' Christ is both the giver and the gift. Christ is the enlightener and the light. May you receive! May you reflect!

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