

BFF321 Golden Lamp Stand, Menorah, #3

Steve Demme: Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works and glorify your Father, who is in heaven.

Scott Moore: Welcome to the "Building Faith Families" podcast with Steve Demme. I'm your host Scott Moore. Thanks for joining us today. Hey, Steve. How are you today?

Steve: I'm doing well. This is different being in the afternoon. We both have our afternoon voices instead of our morning voices.

I just finished a podcast with Heidi St. John, which was wonderful. I haven't seen her for many years because she's running for Congress, and I'm still on the speaking circuit.

I also was in Cincinnati where I saw you and your son. I'm sorry we didn't have more time to visit but that is a busy conference. It was wonderful and was probably one of the most unique conferences I've ever done. I taught three math workshops, and I did three family workshops.

I generally expect people to connect at a heart level during some of the talks that I do for families. I get real transparent. For the first time, I had somebody come up, and tell me they had a breakthrough through one of the math workshops.

Scott: Wow.

Steve: Yes, a math workshop. I pray before I talk. Usually, before I even pray, I ask people, "How many of you really enjoyed this topic when you were in school?" Then, a few hands will go up, but the reason that they're there is because they didn't enjoy it, and now, they're going to have to teach it to their kids.

I didn't realize this many years ago when I started doing these kind of talks. Now, I'm aware of it that some people have a lot of fear related to the prospect of teaching their own children math when they had such a difficult time when they were in school, or had a teacher who told them that they were dumb.

I had one mom stand at the booth and tell me -- and this was over 30 years ago -- that when she was in third grade, her teacher told her that she would never get this, she'd never had anybody as stupid as her, and she was dumb.

Scott: Wow.

Steve: Can you imagine that? Those words lodged in her mind and she still struggles with them. Thank the Lord, she's using MathUSee now, she's understanding it, and she's turning a corner. She was tearing up just telling me this story.

Folks, we have to remember, words mean something. We have to be careful of our words. Another gentleman told me that he had a breakthrough in the algebra workshop. As I was praying, I sensed that somebody was struggling.

I kept praying. I don't usually pray that long or that intense for a math workshop, but he took me aside later and said, he'd had a breakthrough because he realized that not only was his ability to do math hampered by these bad experiences, but it

impacted his view of himself. He saw himself as a failure. God showed him that, and he had a breakthrough. I was astounded.

Scott: That's awesome, man.

Steve: It was a very deep conference for me on many, many levels. Now, we're on part three of the menorah. Even though we've done some deep dives into the words, the almonds and little ornate features of the lamps on top of the seven arms, and the lamp stands, what it's made out of, and all those kind of things, ultimately it's a lamp. Menorah is Hebrew for lamp stand. This is a lamp and a lamp gives off light.

Scott: I must tell you, one of your previous podcast has gotten me thinking. I was listening to "The Bible" podcast today. In the Psalms they mentioned "Praising the rock of our salvation." I was like, "That might have meant something different to them based on what we've talked about with Christ being the Rock and the rock that the water came from." The rock that the water came from was literally their salvation. They were in the desert. I was like, "Huh." That whole Psalm took on a whole new meaning for me. Thank you.

Steve: I've been trying to do that myself. I've been trying to back up, and not get so lost in the trees that I miss the forest. What are two of the most needed things for anybody? You need light, you need water, and we take them for granted. We have this thing called electricity. We have indoor plumbing. These people, they needed light, and especially in this tent.

A little review, remember who built the tent. It was Bezalel. His name means "shadow of God." We're in the tent of meeting, we're only separated by a veil from the most holy place with the mercy seat on top of the arc. The other fellow's name was Oholiab and that word means "Father's tent." Isn't that wonderful?

They are mentioned in Exodus 35:30-34. "Moses said to the sons of Israel, see the Lord has called by name Bezalel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah." Remember Hur? He was the one that was holding up Moses hands along with Aaron. "And He has filled him with the spirit of God, in wisdom and understanding, and in knowledge and in all craftsmanship to make designs for working in gold, and in silver, and in bronze, and then cutting of stones for settings, and in the carving of wood, so as to perform in every inventive work. He has also put in his heart to teach both he and Oholiab, the son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan."

Before I pray, I would like to encourage everybody out there that regardless of what you're calling or your occupation is, we are encouraged to do all to the glory of God. We can pray for the spirit of God to give us what He gave these men, understanding and knowledge in all craftsmanship to work with their hands.

I used to have a problem. I used to think there was spiritual work and there was a secular work. I now recognize that it doesn't make any difference what you do, the Spirit of God can fill you and make you an anointed craftsmen, an anointed graphic

designer, an anointed technical podcaster expert. Whatever it is, the Spirit of God can help us.

Let's pray. Father, thank You for calling Bezalel. Thank You for calling Oholiab. Thank You for more than calling them, equipping them to do the work that You've given them to do. I pray that You'll give us each an anointing and a filling of Your spirit, and give us wisdom, understanding, knowledge and all the different things that You've put in our path. Whether it is being a husband, being a dad, being a painter, being a plumber, being a salesman, whatever it is I pray for the Spirit of God to come upon us in Jesus name. Amen.

Scott: Amen.

Steve: I'm going to just read again, why we're doing what we're doing. Exodus 37, "Then he made the lampstand of pure gold. He made the lampstand of hammered work. Its base and its shaft, its cups, its bulbs and its flowers were of one piece with it. There were six branches going out of its sides. Three branches of the lampstand from the one side of it and three branches of the lampstand from the other side of it. Three cups shaped like almond blossoms, a bulb and a flower in one branch, and three cups shaped like almond blossoms, a bulb in a flower in the other branch. So for the six branches going out of the lampstand.

"In the lampstand, there were four cups shaped like almond blossoms, its bulbs and its flowers and a bulb was under the first pair of branches coming out of it, and a bulb under the second pair of branches coming out of it," etc.

Then towards the end it says, "He made its seven lamps with its snuffers and its trays of pure gold. He made it and all its utensils from a talent of pure gold." This is an amazing work made of one piece. We don't know exactly how much, 75 to 100 pounds of pure gold, and it's one piece.

This golden lamp gives light. This particular light was a result of oil burning. The olive oil was a result of olives which were beaten or pressed to make a light to light the lamp.

I started digging into those words for light. It turned out that the first word, "mā'ôr," is used 19 times in the Bible, and is called a luminary. It's "let there be light" in Genesis 1 when God created the Sun and the Moon, the lights in the sky.

The root word is O-R, which can mean "in the beginning," in the first chapter God created light, that's the noun, and all of these luminaries, the Moon and the Sun, they gave off light, same word, O-R. We have the same word used at the light in this tent as was used in the beginning of the creation, there's light. These lamps give off light.

I'm going to read several passages here that help us with the big picture, Matthew 4:16, "The people who were sitting in darkness saw a great light. Those who were sitting in the land and shadow of death upon them, a light dawned." That's referencing Isaiah 9:2. People that are sitting in darkness, saw a great light.

Now I'm going to read John 1:4–9. "In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it. There came a man sent from God whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify about the light so that all might believe through him. He was not the light, but he came to testify about the light. There was the True Light which, coming into the world, which enlightens every man."

Jesus is the Light. That's our quest, to find Jesus in the tent, to find Jesus in this marvelous tabernacle, which God revealed to Moses on the mount. Jesus himself said, in John 8, "I am the Light of the world. He who follows Me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

The Pharisee said to him, "You are testifying about yourself. Your testimony is not true." Jesus answered and said to them, "Even if I testify about myself, my testimony is true for I know where I came from and where I am going."

In the Gospel of John, written by John in the Spirit, he declares that Jesus was the Light. The light came into the darkness, and he was it. John the Baptist bore witness to the Light. He wasn't the light. Jesus was the Light. He was the True Light. Jesus affirmed that.

I'm going to jump to Revelation 21:23, "The city has no need of the sun or of the moon to shine, for the glory of God has illumined, and its lamp is the Lamb."

I thought this was fascinating, because I was trying to get a big picture and I'm thinking there's the sun, and then there's the moon. The moon, really, isn't a source of light. The moon is the reflection of the sun.

There's one main source of light in the sky, and yet when we get down to the end of the age, the wrap up, the city, the New Jerusalem, doesn't even need either one of them, because the lamp is the Lamb. Notice that word "lamp." It's the same Greek word that's used in the Septuagint to describe the lamp in the tabernacle.

The lamp is the source of light, and the lamp is the Lamb. Nothing really amazing there except that where we start off with the sun, we end up with a son, S–O–N. We started with the S–U–N, and end up with the S–O–N.

Then in Matthew, Jesus says, "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden nor does anyone light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lamp stand. It gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light shine before men, in such a way that they may see your good works and glorify Your Father who is in heaven."

Jesus is clearly the Light. He's the source of light in the New Jerusalem. Then he tells us, as the Body of Christ, that we are the light of the world. In my mind, I'm thinking that I'm really a moon. I'm a reflector of the True Light, because Jesus is the True Light. May God help me to be reflecting his Light to the world.

Remember, in this little tent we have here, there is not only the menorah but right across the room from it, we have the table of showbread, or the Bread of Faces, or the Bread of His Presence.

I think it's fascinating that it says, "Let your light shine before men," just like this light, in the tent, is shining for the 12 tribes of Israel. This light, the Body of Christ, is a lamp which is impacting these 12 tribes. OK, what do you think of that so far?

Scott: That's good. Those verses always confused me a little bit, the words. "I'm the light of the world, and now you're the light of the world." It's like, wait a minute, I don't feel like I'm the light of the world very often so.

Steve: This is part of the mystery of this because Jesus is obviously the menorah. We talked about that, the seven, golden lamp stands. The last time we spoke, in the Book of Revelation, it's the church. We know in 1 Corinthians 12, it says, you are the Body of Christ and individually members of it. Christ is all and in all, and yet we are part of His body. He's the Light of the world, we're the light of the world. I can get that by faith, but it's still a little bit of a mystery.

I agree with you that the only way that my mind can get around to this is that because I'm reflecting Christ. He's the one that's the light of the world, and He's the one that gets all the glory. We're simply doing our best to reflect Him. I like the fact that that church, the Body of Christ in the tent, is giving light to the 12 tribes across the tent. That makes sense to me, too, because that's part of our job as the church is to be a light to the world, and to give God the glory, but we are also called to reach the entire world for Christ and those 12 tribes, those are the Bread of Faces, those represent people.

It's interesting because there's a bunch of verses in Isaiah, Luke, and Acts that I'm going to read. In Isaiah 42:6, "Jehovah has called thee in righteousness, and will hold your hand, and will keep you, and He will give you for a covenant of the people for a light of the Gentiles."

The same thing in Isaiah 49:5. He says, "I will give thee for a light to the Gentiles that you may be my salvation unto the end of the earth."

Then, in Luke 2, Simeon is prophesying. He says, "You know what? You can let your servant depart now, Lord, because mine eyes have seen your salvation which you have prepared before the face of all people." Right? Bread of Faces. "A light for revelation to the Gentiles and the glory of Your people, Israel." There's a lot going on here. This tent, this light is impacting the people across the room.

This is where you and I would say, "No, no, no. We're moons." Here's what Paul and Barnabas said. After the Jewish people had rejected them, he said, "We turn to the Gentiles for the Lord has commanded us saying, 'I have set you for a light of the Gentiles that you should be my salvation to the uttermost parts of the earth.'"

When I'm reading Isaiah 49, I'm thinking He's talking to Christ. He's talking about the savior. Yet Paul and Barnabas in the Spirit, said, "This is the verse that God used to send us to the Gentiles."

They were probably praying, fasting, about what's our ministry and what they were called to do. He says, "You go reach the Gentiles. You go reach the nations," which is what ethnos, the Greek translation for Gentiles. There's a lot going on here of the light reaching the world for Christ.

There's also a couple wonderful passages that I find very edifying. "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path." Exact same words used to describe the lamp, the lamp stand, and the light from the lamp stand. Isn't that amazing?

Scott: Is that the same word you were saying is used in Genesis about creation, "Let there be light"?

Steve: Yes, same root, pretty sure. His word is a lamp. His word is a light. Beautiful stuff. I'll double check that before we're done here to make sure.

2 Corinthians 4:4, "The God of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel, of the glory of Christ, Who is the image of God."

Then two verses later, it says, "God who said, 'Light shall shine out of darkness,' is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the Light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ."

This good stuff. Like you said, you're singing a song the other day about the rock, and you think, "Wow, the rock. I know more about the rock than I ever did before."

Now, I'm reading through The New Testament. I'm seeing all these verses about light, about lamps, and lamp stands. I'm reading Revelation, and I'm seeing lamps and lamp stands. I'm seeing the church being the seven lamp stands. Seven golden lamp stands representing the seven churches.

I don't know if you have connected some of these dots, but you know where those seven churches are? Not far from where we have a war going on. They're in Asia Minor. Think about that. There were seven churches in that land. Maybe there's more going on in Ukraine than we think. Maybe it's not just Russian aggression. Maybe there are spiritual battles going on that we're not aware of. I don't know. I'm much more attuned to this now than I was before.

Scott: Indeed. I was reminded of the verse I had to look it up in Isaiah 9:2, "The people walking in darkness have seen a great light, on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned." It's all over. I'm sure there's a hundred other verses you can find with light in. That was just the one that came to mind.

Steve: If you go back just a fuzz. In the first verse, it talks about Naphtali, etc. That's the same thing as in Matthew 4:16.

Steve: Matthew 4:16 quotes Isaiah 9:2.

Scott: Got you.

Steve: That was a fulfillment of the prophecy.

Scott: Yeah. Awesome. I don't have much else to say, just awesome.

Steve: Amen. Next time we're going to talk about the source of the light which is the oil. The oil is very significant because if you don't have oil, you don't have light.

What's the oil? Where did it come from? We know it came from olives.

What does it represent? I think it represents the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the one that filled Jesus. It's the Holy Spirit that fills the church. There's some really good stuff there. We probably covered a bunch for today.

Let's pray. Father, thank You for sending the light of the world. Thank You for Jesus who is the light of the world. Thank You that we someday will not even need the sun and the moon because we will have Christ himself. The Lamp will be the L-A-M-P. He'll be the Lamp. He'll be source of light. Thank You for shining in our hearts. Thank You for casting out the darkness. I pray that You will continue to magnify Jesus in and through the church, so that we can reach those whose minds have been blinded.

Those unbelievers who haven't seen Jesus. Let us be like that menorah in the tent. Let our light reach the 12 tribes. Let our light reach the nations because we know that someday, every knee is going to bow, every tongue is going to confess that Jesus is Lord to the glory of God the Father, in Jesus name. Amen.

Scott: Amen. That's our show for this week, folks. Thanks for joining us for the Building Faith Families podcast with Steve Demme. If you have a question for the show, email Steve at spdemme@gmail.com. If you have a question for me, you can reach me at scott@unsocializedmedia.com. Thanks for joining us. Have a great week.