



## THE MYSTERY OF THE MENORAH

The Seven letters to the Seven Churches of Revelation

### Study No 2

#### Revelation 1:9-11

"I, John, your brother and partner in the tribulation and the kingdom and the patient endurance that are in Jesus, was on the island called Patmos on account of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus.

I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet saying, "Write what you see in a book and send it to the seven churches, to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamum and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea."

Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking to me, and on turning I saw **seven golden lampstands**, and in the midst of the **lampstands** one like a son of man, clothed with a long robe and with a golden sash around his chest."

#### The Letter to Ephesus - Revelation 2:1-7

"To the angel of the church in Ephesus write: 'The words of him who holds the seven stars in his right hand, who walks among the seven golden lampstands.

"I know your works, your toil and your patient endurance, and how you cannot bear with those who are evil, but have tested those who call themselves apostles and are not, and found them to be false.

I know you are enduring patiently and bearing up for my name's sake, and you have not grown weary.

But I have this against you, that you have abandoned the love you had at first. Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent, and do the works you did at first. If not, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place, unless you repent.

Yet this you have: you hate the works of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who conquers I will grant to eat of the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God."

#### Introduction

Church tradition believes that John was the apostolic leader/pastor of these seven congregations. As we read the seven letters, we see that each letter follows a similar structure and pattern.

1. The **Person** of Christ is **Presented**
2. The **Praise** from Christ is **Proclaimed**
3. The **Problems** in the Church are **Pinpointed**
4. The **Promise** from Christ is **Prophesied**

The only exception to this pattern is the churches of *Smyrna & Philadelphia* where there are no problems, and *Laodicea* where there is no praise.

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**Ephesus:** A leading city in the province of Asia Minor. Acts defines the city of Ephesus as a centre of pagan worship and false religion (Acts 19-20).

The church in Ephesus was established by Paul during his second main missionary journey, with the help of Priscilla and Aquilla, who oversaw the running of the fellowship. Paul spent over two years in Ephesus preaching and teaching in the lecture hall of Tyrannus. The church in Ephesus was a strategic apostolic base for training and discipleship, not only in the city, but also across the whole region. Other leaders who were connected to the city church were Apollos, Timothy and John.

**The church in Ephesus was the only community of Gods people who had two letters written to them by two different Apostolic leaders - Paul and John.**

In the book of Revelation, Jesus speaks to the leaders and congregation at Ephesus:

### **1. The Person of Christ.....Presented (2:1)**

2 fold revelation:

- **Power** (Authority) "Holds the seven stars".
- **Presence** (Anointing) "Walks amongst the 7 golden lampstands.

Jesus is revealed as the one who not only upholds all things (Creation), but is also continually in the midst of the church (New Creation).

### **2. The Praise from Christ.....Pronounced (2:2-3,6)**

The believers in Ephesus were commended for their:

- **Devotion** - loyalty, faithfulness
- **Discernment** - exposing false ministries in the church
- **Diligence** - Perserverence and strength

**Acts 20:28** - Paul warned the Ephesians elders of the dangers of false teachers arising from within the church.

"Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood. I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves will arise men speaking twisted things, to draw away the disciples after them. Therefore be alert, remembering that for three years I did not cease night or day to admonish everyone with tears."

[**Note:** The Nicolaitans were were group of cultists who practiced immorality as a sign of spirituality. The name "Nicolaitans" is derived from the Greek word nikolaos, a compound of the words nikos and laos. The word nikos is the Greek word that means to conquer or to subdue. The word laos is the Greek word for the people. It is also where we get the word

laity. When these two words are compounded into one, they form the name Nicolas, which literally means one who conquers and subdues the people. It seems to suggest that the Nicolaitans were somehow conquering and subduing the people]

### 3. The Problems in the Church.....Pinpointed (2:2-4).

A loss of spiritual passion for Christ "You have forsaken your first love"

The remedy for the problem -

- **Remember** - "where you have fallen"
- **Repent** - Turn around and change direction back to God
- **Relive** - "do the works you did at first"

Failure to respond to the Word of the Lord would result in the removal of Gods "power and presence" - **The Menorah**

### 4. The Promise of Christ.....Prophesied (2:7)

"He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who conquers I will grant to eat of the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God."

Wisdom and Discernment would be needed if the church was going to respond positively to the call of Christ.

Gods promise to those who would obey his Word was that he would allow them to "eat of the fruit of the tree of life"

Garden of Eden: 2 Trees - Gen 2:9

Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil **DEATH**

Tree of Life **LIFE**

The Fruit of the Tree of life is **Eternal Life** - Genesis 3:22. "Then the LORD God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of us in knowing good and evil. Now, lest he reach out his hand and take also of the tree of life and eat, and live forever-"